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ECONOMICS AND SPACE



RESISTANCE OF THE GREATER BAL TIC REGION STATES TO MARKET CYCLE CHANGES

*V. L. Baburin*¹



A non-linear change process is a specific feature of a poorly regulated market economy. However, many researchers have shown that different economic sectors do not respond to market cycles in a similar way. Regional economic systems are a combination of many sectors, therefore a hypothesis about the correlation between the stability of regional economies and market cycles is examined. The study is conducted using the Baltic countries (hereinafter referred to as Greater Baltic Region, GBR) as an example. GBR countries have been classified into highly stable, relatively stable, unstable, and highly unstable based on the study of the stability of national economies to global cycle processes. The GDP dynamics of the countries were compared to GDP cycles of the US and the EU, which are the main financial centres. To understand the reasons, the sectoral structure of GDP is additionally considered. The results allow the author to classify of GBR countries according to the structure of economic sectors and the stability of the regional economy.

Keywords: market cycles, GDP dynamics, sectoral structure, stability, sensitivity

Introduction

Available country-specific GDP time series make it possible to evaluate changes in the global economic situation from the 1970s onwards. However, in view of the dramatic changes that took place after the collapse of the socialist order and the demise of the USSR, I will not consider time series dating before 1991. Among other things, this approach

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will be instrumental in its way of comparing the old and the new capitalist countries of the Greater Baltic region. This region attracts special interest because the Soviet-time spatial division of labour between disparate economies is being 'digested' at different rates across the area. Moreover, the type of capitalist transition model adopted by a post-Soviet country indirectly points to the features of its national political system.

The problem of economic cycles has been studied for many decades. For instance, in an earlier work (Baburin, 2018), I consider the Juglar-Marx mid-term cycles. Initially 10–11 years long, they now contracted to 5–7 years under the impact of technological change. Other popular concepts include Braudel's secular cycles, the Kondratiev-Schumpeter long waves, and the Kuznets curve. Taken together, they describe the complex multi-cycle character of the GDP curve.

This study relies on the theory of cyclo-genetic dynamics (Yakovets, 1999; Subbeto, 1994; Baburin 2010, 2012, 2014, and others), which, in a certain sense, is a precursor of the path dependence theory. It focuses on the influence of the regions' inherited economic structure on their current development. In this article, I will discuss how regional economies react to the Juglar – Marx cycles.

Soviet economic geography was the product of a rather isolated and self-sufficient economic system, which was planned and thus unaffected by global market cycles. However, Petr Baklanov used the category of fluctuating optimum in considering the uncertainty of location in terms of economic processes. This category reflects the essential impossibility of selecting a location that will be optimal over a long time because the weights of factors at play constantly change.

At the same time, specialisation and exchange in the framework of spatial division of labour have always merited the attention of Russian (and earlier, Soviet) economic geographers. Among them are N.N. Baransky and N.N. Kolosovsky, A.T. Khrushchev, M.D. Sharygin, N. Yu. Gladys and A.I. Chistobaev, O.I. Shabliy, and many other geographers and economists. In the post-Soviet period, when Russia was becoming increasingly integrated into the world economy, a community of experts in regional economics (A.N. Granberg, A.E. Probst, M.K. Bandman, I.V. Grishina, and others) turned to the competitiveness of regions and their ability to bypass depression phases.



Outside this community, the problem has been tackled by Paul Krugman, Masahisa Fujita, Anthony Venables, and others. In particular, Krugman and Venables have shown that the greatest geographical advantage is associated with moderate trade costs. When trade barriers and transport costs are insignificant, the geographical advantage of areas with better access to a market becomes insignificant, and businesses return to the old periphery. In another work, they supplement their model with the concept of the production chain: different manufacturers benefit from operating from the same location, because of a reduction in shipment costs.

Approaches that are very similar to the one used in this article have been proposed by Frankel and Rose (1998) and Gianelle et al. (2017). Both works analyse international trade, specialisation, business cycles, and endogenous cycles within spatial processes.

Imbs (2004), Montoya and de Haan (2007), and Lucas et al. (1977) take their analysis even further by considering not only trade and specialisation but also the financial component and, what is more important, the synchronisation of different cycles, including regional ones.

Another publication worth mentioning is the contribution of A. P. Wiatrak, who examines the resilience of Polish voivodeships with different specialisation to market economy cycles. According to the study, the most resilient regions are those specialising in agriculture and mining. A number of works has demonstrated that urbanised regions are more similar in their fluctuations to each other than to rural areas, that less developed Eurozone regions have greater amplitudes of fluctuations, and that the cycles of countries connected by close trade ties tend to synchronise. Some publications determine the weights of different factors. Although the contribution of politics is the greatest, the factor of ties becomes decisive for industrially developed countries.

Other works (Zemtsov and Baburin, 2016; Baburin et al., 2016; Baburin, 2018a; Baburin 2018b) examine the influence of the economic and geographical position on the competitive advantages and disadvantages of regions and cities. This influence can be considered as a factor of the resilience of regional economies.

The above proves the relevance of studies into the resilience of spatial socio-economic systems to changes in global economic and social processes.

The **hypothesis** put forward in this study is as follows: there is a dependence between the resilience of regional economies to market cycles (and other factors) and their specialisations. Modelling these processes and identifying spatial natural-historical and socio-cultural systems that maximise the aggregate resilience of regional economies comprise a new area of research for the Russian school of thought.

This area of research requires a combination of methods. The first group of methods is used to calculate the delta between region-specific incremental costs (positive or negative), industry average costs, and the changing demand for the products of companies operating within the regional specialisation (Baburin, 2018). The second group of methods are used to compute time intervals that are optimal for the effective functioning of a certain specialisation against the background of a changing economic situation. However, the information necessary for employing this approach is not always available.

At the first stage, I use the graphical-analytical method to conduct a pilot study into the above-mentioned dependencies. My primary focus is on the reactions of regions that have different industry structures and economic backgrounds. To make the comparison reliable, the GDP dynamics in the EU was used as the 'basic cycle pattern' (fig. 1).

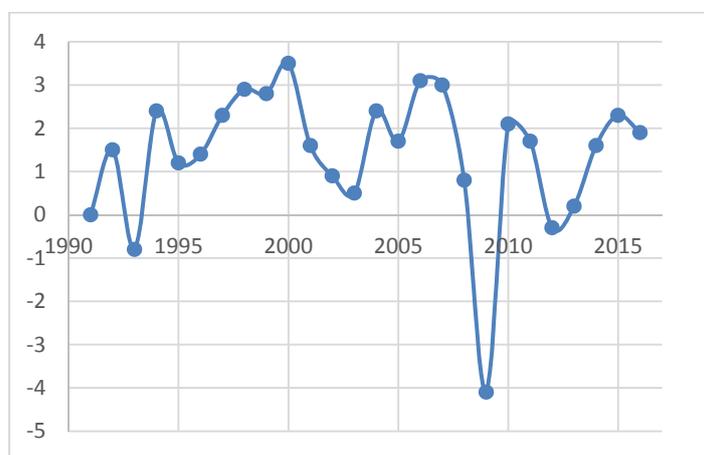


Fig. 1. GDP dynamics in the EU, 1991–2017 (%)

As the chart shows, the economy of the EU experienced several five–seven year periods of growth and recession. Expansions were observed in 1996–2000, 2003–2007, and 2012–2015 and contractions in 1989–1991, 1993–1995, 2001–2003, and 2008–2009, with the amplitude reaching 8 %.

Although the dynamics of the Russian economy has a similar configuration, it is characterised by a significantly greater amplitude (over 30 %) of deviations from average trends. This suggests that Russia's transitional economy remains overly sensitive to the rhythms created by the leading world economies.

As I show in an earlier article (Baburin, 2018), industries differ in resilience to market cycles. The reaction of the power and heat generation and water supply industries to market cycles is rather weak, whereas mining is more sensitive. The least resilient are manufacturing industries, with the amplitude reaching 28 %. This amplitude is almost three times that of mining and six times that of heat and power generation and water supply. Similar industry-specific studies show that the least sensitive industries are agriculture (or the primary sector in general), transport, and state services. Commercial services are the least resilient.

These patterns suggest a dependence between the reaction of regional economies and their specialisations.

The Greater Baltic region includes four Nordic countries (Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark), Germany and Poland (they border the Baltic Sea in the south), the Baltics, and three Russian regions (the Kaliningrad and Leningrad regions and Saint Petersburg).

Below, I will consider the sensitivity of the economies of the Greater Baltic region (GBR) to market cycles, depending on their industry structure (fig. 2).

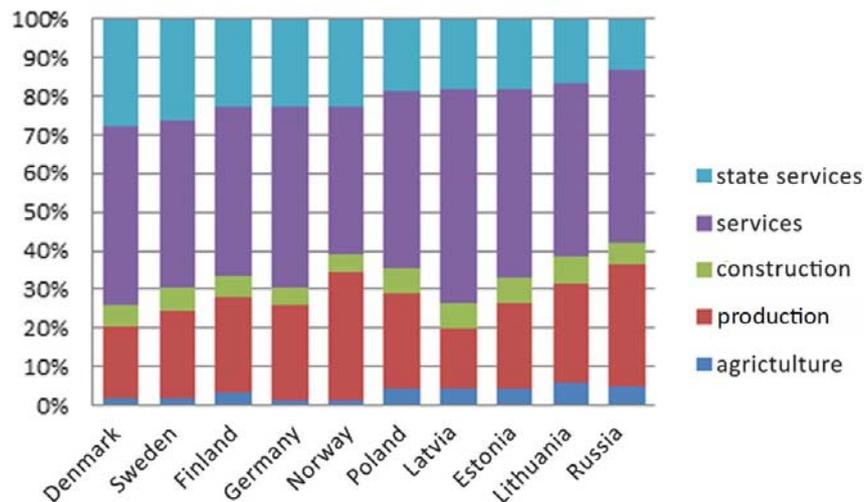


Fig. 2 The industry structure of the economies of the Greater Baltic region

The analysis of the industry structure of the GBR shows that the proportion of the state services sector is the greatest in Denmark and Sweden, being rather significant in the other 'old' EU member states. Commercial services comprise the largest sector in Estonia and Latvia. The proportion of production is the highest in Norway (the oil industry dominates) and the Russian Federation. Manufacturing dominates the economies of Finland and Germany. The proportion of construction is the highest in Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia.

Below, I will consider the GDP dynamics of these countries in 1998–2016 (fig. 3 and 4) and try to link it to differences in regional specialisations.



Fig. 3 The GDP dynamics of the 'old' EU countries

The chart (fig. 3) clearly shows that Finland's economy is the most sensitive to crises (15%). Significant fluctuations are observed in other countries with a significant proportion of manufacturing. However, in Denmark (9), Germany (9), and Sweden (12), they are partly counterbalanced by the state services sector. Dominated by energy industries, the economy of Norway is the most resilient (5). The results obtained agree well with the hypothesis.

The situation in the Baltics is completely different. The economies of Estonia (dominated by the IT sector) and Latvia react most strongly to market cycle fluctuations (29% and 28% respectively).

This is explained by the excessive role played by commercial services and the production sector dominated by manufacturing in these countries. Heavily influenced by the EU, the agricultural sector cannot serve as a buffer. The reaction of the Lithuanian economy (26 %) in terms of GDP dynamics is more moderate, being the closest to that of the Kaliningrad region (fig. 4).

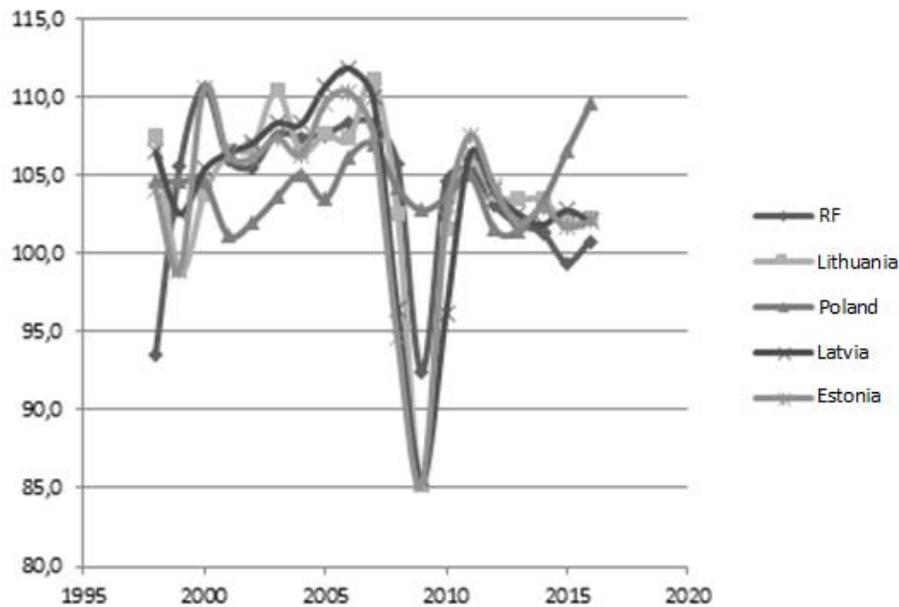


Fig. 4 The GDP dynamics of the 'new' EU countries

Similar fluctuations, although of a smaller amplitude (17 %), are characteristic of the Russian economy. The difference in the amplitudes can be explained by the scale of the Russian economy and the significant proportion of agriculture and mining. A special case is Poland, whose economy is almost insensitive to crises (6 %, constantly growing GDP), regardless of the structure of the economy. The reason is the considerable investment earmarked for Poland by the EU.

Using the approach described above and the analysis of GDP dynamics of the GBR countries and Russia's border regions during four expansions and three contractions, it is possible to produce a typology of regions based on different principles. In terms of resilience of economies to crises, the following types can be distinguished.



Table 1.

**Typology of GBR countries and regions based
on their economic structures and reactions to market fluctuations**

Specialisation	Services and/or manufacturing	Export-oriented production and a small proportion of services
Most resilient	Poland	Norway
Relatively resilient	Sweden, Germany, Denmark	–
Non-resilient	Finland	Russia
Least resilient	Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania	–

Conclusion. The above analysis of the dependence between market cycles and the value-added structure in GBR countries and regions supports the hypothesis that GDP dynamics is affected by specialisation. Overall, the economies of ‘old’ EU countries with developed government regulations systems are more resilient than those of ‘new’ member states are. However, there are two exceptions: Finland, which is closely integrated with the economy of Russia (their amplitudes of fluctuation are almost similar) and has one quasi-corporation (Noika), and Poland, whose economic wonder is sustained by substantial investment from the EU.

The economies of the Baltics are very sensitive to market cycles. This is explained by an excessive proportion of the services sector, a small percentage of state services, and a counterproductive policy towards Russia.

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ENVIRONMENTAL
INTENSITY
OF ECONOMIC GROWTH
IN THE BALTIC SEA
REGION

*E. A. Tretyakova*¹



National economic development is subject to a number of restrictions. One of the main constraints is the threat of complete exhaustion of non-renewable resources and environmental pollution exceeding the capacity of the planet. However, the rapid spread of resource-saving technologies is reducing the environmental intensity of economic activities. In this study, I aim to examine the ecological-economic dynamics of the environmental effects of economic development in the regions of Russia's North-Western Federal District (NWFD). I employ an extended version of Peter A. Victor's model to produce a comprehensive evaluation of changes in economic indicators and correlate them with the total and specific environmental impact. I conduct a factor analysis to identify the main effects influencing the ecological-economic dynamics. The use of water resources in the NWFD demonstrates green growth, whereas electricity consumption and wastewater treatment fall into the brown zone and industrial and municipal waste treatment into the black one. The factor analysis has shown that population change has a very weak effect on the situation. Much more influential factors are the income effect (higher incomes translate into greater consumption and thus more significant pollution levels) and the technology effect produced by a decrease in the environmental intensity of production. To promote green development, it is advisable to increase the influence of the technology effect by stimulating resource efficiency and switching to the circular economy model.

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Economic growth based on modern principles of management is accompanied by increased environmental pollution, the degradation of natural ecosystems, a reduction in biodiversity, the depletion of natural resources, climate change, and deteriorating public health. Today, the established philosophy and practices of management are no longer up to the task of improving the quality of life. There is a need for a change in priorities and for a transition to a new trajectory in line with the principles of sustainable development and the green economy. This trajectory will ensure economic growth focused on the needs of society, economic well-being, social justice, and providing a safe living environment rather than on obtaining the maximum economic benefit for a limited number of people through ruthless exploitation of natural and labour resources. Thus, environmental security is becoming crucial for economic development and the very existence of human society.

Environmental problems are global. Therefore, the green economy is a natural target for all countries. It is important to find an optimal balance between the needs of society for material and non-material goods and the natural resources of the earth to ensure that these goods can be produced. Here, technological innovations play a special role. They are necessary for a transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy, recycling, and reorganisation of industrial processes [1]. The modernisation of industrial production should embrace technological solutions that translate into efficient use of resources, a decrease in environmental pressure, and an increase in the quality of the environment.

The scientific community focuses on the benefits of green economic growth, which is aimed at creating new technologies and developing green industries. Moreover, green economic growth means new jobs, less poverty, and growing social responsibility of businesses. All this translates into better environmental performance and easier access to clean water and energy. The green growth concept can be applied to both developed and developing countries. However, it requires rethinking the general growth paradigm, since the current emphasis on quantitative growth has a detrimental impact on the environment and the preservation of natural resources for future generations. A new concept should be developed to ensure qualitative growth that is balanced in social, environmental and economic terms and embraces new ideas and innovations (see [2–6]).



In this study, I aim to investigate the ecological and economic dynamics of environmental effects associated with the economic development of one of Russia's leading macro-regions – the Northwestern Federal District (NWFD). The objectives of this research are as follows: 1) to justify my choice of a model and research methods, 2) to test these methods and model using the case of NWFD regions, and to 3) summarise and interpret the results obtained.

Theoretical approaches to assessing the environmental impact on economic development

Green economy relies on low-carbon and environmentally friendly production facilities that satisfy social and individual needs. While sparing the global ecosystem, these facilities preserve natural resources to pass them on to future generations for sustainable development. Thus, the overriding goal of the green economy is to move from high carbon to low carbon production and consumption. Scientific advances in technology have provided a wealth of opportunities for private and corporate businesses to move from resource-intensive and wasteful business models to resource-efficient and less energy-intensive ones [7].

Russian and international researchers have paid significant attention to measuring and evaluating these processes. Research literature describes various indices characterising the environmental impact of economic activities. Among them are the ecological footprint, the water footprint, the carbon footprint, and the living planet index.

Economic and mathematical methods and models are widely used in the green assessments of economic activities. In particular, it has been shown that innovation plays a big role in green growth and that R&D spending translates into lower carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in developed countries. In other words, not only is R&D spending a driver of growth in any economy but it also lends an impetus to sustainable development, where growth is accompanied by lower carbon monoxide emissions. This, among other things, encourages state regulatory bodies to invest in R&D and in combating climate change [8]. It has been emphasised that consumer awareness of environmentally friendly products has a positive effect on the formation of a green market and green entrepre-



neurship [9]. In addition, research has shown that the participation of trade unions is crucial for introducing more complex and radical innovations and reducing emissions [10].

A number of works consider different aspects of the problem. He et al. [11] estimate the effect of industrial dynamics and foreign direct investment on environmental performance. Mumtaz et al. [12] consider the relationship between changes in the main macroeconomic indicators and changes in electricity consumption. Tantau et al. [13] build a panel regression model to investigate the dependence between municipal recycling rates, materials recycling rates, R&D costs, trade volumes of processed raw materials, and revenues from environmental taxes. Smulders et al. [14] demonstrate that the greenness of an optimal growth path can depend heavily on initial conditions, with a variety of different adjustments occurring concurrently along an optimal path. Factor-augmenting technical-change targeting at offsetting resource depletion is critical to sustaining long-term growth within natural limits on the availability of natural resources and environmental services.

A. V. Polovyan and E. N. Vishnevskaya [15] focus on the problem of green development occurring in some countries at the expense of pollution in other countries. Economic and mathematical modelling has shown that the best results are achieved through a complex influence when regulation means encouragement and technology spillover into environmentally deprived areas to increase the overall efficiency of environmental protection activities. Another important incentive is strict sanctions stimulating both a change in the behaviour patterns of economic agents and the development of an innovative system capable of generating effective technological solutions to environmental problems.

V. V. Dmitriev and N. V. Kaledin [16] adopt an integrated approach to assessing the state of regional socio-ecological-economic systems. They reveal a tendency towards an increase in the quality of life in regions and suggest determining the stability of socio-ecological-economic systems using the critical values of integrated indicators, at which the system maintains its properties and parameters and remains within the same class of quality of life.

An important technique for the environmental assessment of economic growth is Peter A. Victor's model [17]. It uses one of the most common indicators of ecological intensity: carbon emissions per unit of GDP. Victor distinguishes green, brown, and black

economic growth. His calculations show that the economic growth in Canada in recent decades was mainly brown. Victor's model, which is employed for comprehensive and dynamic assessments of economic indicators and their comparison with the total and specific ecological load, has been successfully tested and recommended by Russian scientists [18].

Index factor analysis is very productive in assessing the environmental intensity of economic activities. In particular, it is used to evaluate the contribution of various factors to the dynamics of energy intensity and greenhouse gas emissions from fuel combustion in energy generation [19, 20, 21]. However, the possible scope of its application is very wide.

In this study, I use factor analysis and an extended interpretation of Victor's model, which make it possible both to investigate the dynamics of volumetric economic indicators comparable with the volumetric and specific indicators of ecological load and to identify factors affecting ecological-economic dynamics.

The description of the research method

I propose to assess the environmental intensity of economic development in two steps. Firstly, one should determine the type of economic dynamics (the 'colour' of economic growth or recession) using Victor's model. Secondly, it is necessary to identify the most significant factors of economic dynamics by means of factor modelling. This approach makes it possible to establish what regulatory activities are required to support or adjust the current development trajectory.

Victor's model compares changes in the ecological-economic system using a certain point of reference, which is, as a rule, the beginning of the study period. At this point, the following indicators are recorded:

- the economic result (ER, gross domestic or regional product, production output, etc.);
- the ecological load (EL, the total amount of pollution produced [industrial and municipal wastes, emissions of air pollutants, discharge of polluted wastewater, etc.] or the total volume of consumed resources [electric or thermal energy, clean water, fuel resources, etc.]);
- the environmental intensity (EI) or resource intensity (the quotient of the ecological load divided by the economic result).

Below, I compare the values of the indicators with their initial values, determine their deviation, and identify the type of ecological-economic dynamics (Table 1).

Table 1

The type of ecological-economic dynamics [22]

Economic Result (ER)	Total Ecological Load (EL)	Environmental intensity (EI)	Characteristics of ecological-economic dynamics
Growth	Reduction	Reduction	Green growth
Growth	Growth	Reduction	Brown growth
Growth	Growth	Growth	Black growth
Recession	Growth	Growth	Black recession
Recession	Reduction	Growth	Green recession
Recession	Reduction	Reduction	Absolutely Green recession

Empirical studies show that most countries and regions have green and brown economic. In this vein, E. A. Lyaskovskaya and K.M. Grigorieva [23] carry out a comparative analysis of the brown and green economy models and demonstrate the negative consequences of choosing the brown economy model.

After obtaining the qualitative characteristics of the ecological-economic dynamics, I propose to identify factors that have the strongest impact on ecological-economic dynamics. I choose the factor model, since it displays the causal relationships between the indicators of ecological load, ecological intensity, and economic result. Therefore, the resultant model should reflect the dependence of the ecological load on the quantitative factor (for example, economic result) and the qualitative factor (ecological intensity).

A similar approach was used in [24]. However, it was applied solely to the effect of human factor on the scope of environmental impact:

$$I = P \cdot F, \quad (1)$$

I is the total value of the negative human impact on nature,

P is population (a quantitative factor),

F is a function measuring the environmental impact per capita (a qualitative factor).

This model, labelled *IPAT*, was applied in a modified form in [21, 25, and 26]. The scale of anthropogenic impact (*I*) depends on three factors: the population size (*P*), affluence (*A*) and technology (*T*):

$$I = P \cdot A \cdot T \quad (2)$$

For the purposes of this study, the *IPAT* model can be written as follows:

$$EL = P \cdot A \cdot EI, \quad (3)$$

where *EL* is the total value of the ecological load,

P is population (a quantitative factor),

A is affluence (a qualitative factor),

EI is the environmental intensity (a qualitative factor), which describes the technologies applied.

An evaluation of the impact of these factors on the ecological load makes it possible to carry out a quantitative assessment of the contribution of each factor as a combination of effects, namely:

- the population effect produced by population change (ΔP);
- the income effect resulting from a change in the welfare of the population (ΔW);
- the technology effect relating to changes in the environmental intensity as a result of changes in the technologies applied (ΔEI).

An evaluation of the environmental intensity of economic development in the NWFD regions

I tested the method discussed above using the case of one of Russia's leading macro-regions – the NWFD. I conducted my study in 2011–2015. All the necessary data for all the NWFD regions are available for this period. In my study, I relied on official statistics published on the website of the Federal State Statistics Service¹ and the report *On the state and environmental protection of the Russian Federation in 2016*²

¹ Regions of Russia. The main characteristics of the subjects of the Russian Federation. 2017: Stat. Sat, *Rosstat.*, 2017; Environmental protection in Russia. 2016: Stat. sb., *Rosstat.*, 2016.

² *On the state and environmental protection of the Russian Federation in 2016*, 2018, available at: http://www.mnr.gov.ru/docs/o_sostoyanii_i_ob_okhrane_okruzhayushchey_sredy_rossiyskoy_federatsii/gosudarstvennyy_doklad_o_sostoyanii_i_ob_okhrane_okruzhayushchey_sredy_rossiyskoy_federatsii_v_2016_/ (accessed 31.08.2018)

Gross regional product (GRP) in fixed (2015) prices was used as the measure of the economic result and GRP in fixed prices per capita as the affluence indicator. Carbon dioxide emissions, the volume of household and industrial waste, and the wastewater discharge were employed as the measures of the environmental load. The resource intensity was assumed as a combination of the electrical and water intensity of GRP.

Table 2 presents the characteristics of ecological-economic dynamics in terms of the environmental intensity and the resource intensity.

Table 2

The ecological-economic dynamics in the NWFD regions

Region	Ecological intensity			Resource intensity	
	Industrial and municipal waste	CO ₂ emissions	Discharge to surface water	Electricity consumption	Freshwater use
Republic of Karelia	<i>brown</i>	<i>brown</i>	<i>brown</i>	green	green
Komi Republic	black	green	green	<i>brown</i>	green
Arkhangelsk region	black	green	green	<i>brown</i>	green
Vologda region	<i>brown</i>	green	green	<i>brown</i>	green
Kaliningrad region	black	green	<i>brown</i>	<i>brown</i>	green
Leningrad region	black	<i>brown</i>	<i>brown</i>	<i>brown</i>	green
Murmansk region	green	green	green	green	green
Novgorod region	black	<i>brown</i>	<i>brown</i>	<i>brown</i>	green
Pskov region	black	<i>brown</i>	<i>brown</i>	green	green
Saint Petersburg city	black	<i>brown</i>	<i>brown</i>	<i>brown</i>	green

As the table shows, the greatest success was achieved in rational water use: against the background of growing GRP, the use of fresh water reduced and the water-intensity of GRP decreased. In particular, the volume of recycled and reused water increased in the Arkhangelsk, Vologda, and Novgorod regions.

The waste management situation is extremely difficult. Everywhere (with the exception of the Murmansk region), the volume

of wastes increased. In the Republic of Komi, the Arkhangelsk, Kaliningrad, Leningrad, Novgorod, and Pskov regions, and Saint Petersburg, the rate of increase in waste volumes significantly exceeded that in GRP. Therefore, the economic growth in the NWFD regions (with the exception of the Murmansk region) is extensive from the environmental perspective, since because it is accompanied by growing. Figure 1 compares the basic rates of changes in the real GRP and the volumes of industrial and municipal wastes generated in 2011 and 2015. The graph does not illustrate the indicators of the ecological-economic dynamics of the Arkhangelsk region, where the growth of the volume of industrial and municipal waste was extremely high, reaching 3615.6 % over the study period.

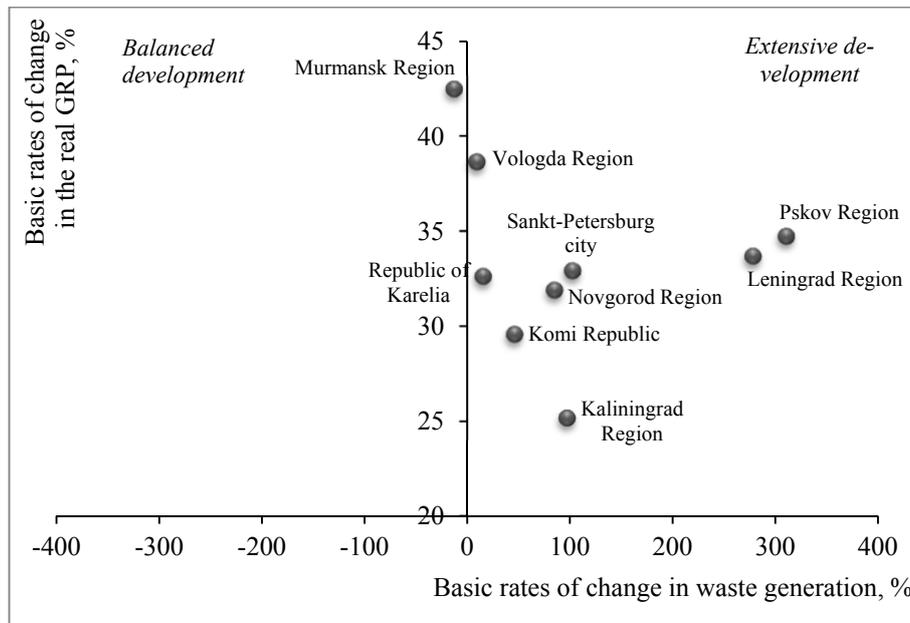


Fig. 1. GRP dynamics and industrial and municipal wastes generation in 2011 – 2015

A positive trend is a decrease in total and specific carbon dioxide emissions in the Komi Republic and the Arkhangelsk, Vologda, Kaliningrad, and Murmansk regions. A reduction in the total and specific volume of polluted wastewater discharge was observed in the Komi Republic and the Arkhangelsk, Vologda, and Murmansk regions.

An ecologically balanced change in all the indicators was observed in the Murmansk region, where GRP growth was accompanied by a decrease in both the total ecological load and the environmental intensity of economic activity. This was a result of structural shifts in the regional economy. In particular, the proportion of mining decreased by 3.9%, of manufacturing industries by 3.7%, and of energy by 0.2%.

I analysed the factors behind these trends using the model discussed above (see formula [3]). In assessing the influence of these factors on pollution volumes, I employed the chain substitution technique, which is described in detail in [27, pp. 100–107]).

The analysis showed that the population effect associated with population change was observed in the study region. However, in all the cases, it was less marked than the other two. Further, I analysed the trends identified in the context of the income and technology effects. Tables 3–5 demonstrate the results of my analysis.

In all the cases, greater incomes were associated with stronger pollution. This may be explained by growing incomes leading to heavy consumption and thus, more substantial pollution. This situation is described by the ascending part of the Kuznets environmental curve (Fig. 2), when the achieved level of economic affluence is still insufficient for a massive change in the environmental behaviour of both consumers and producers. A similar conclusion has been made in some works on socio-ecological patterns in the Russian Federation (see, for example, [28]).

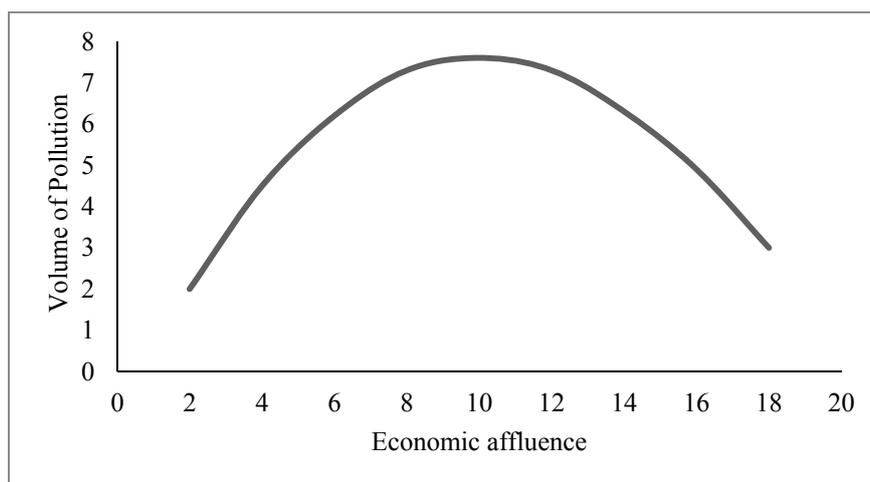


Fig. 2. Kuznets environmental curve [29]

As Table 3 shows, the stimulating effect of welfare growth on waste generation in the Murmansk region was compensated for by a dramatic reduction in the environmental intensity of production technologies. All this led to a decrease in both general and specific pollution.

In all the NWFED regions, the environmental intensity of technology was decreasing throughout the study period with respect to carbon dioxide emissions. Data shown in Table 4 suggest that the technology effect was stronger than the income effect was in the Komi Republic and the Kaliningrad, Pskov, and Arkhangelsk regions.

In all the study regions, the environmental intensity of technology decreased in relation to wastewater discharge. Data in Table 5 show that the technology effect prevailed over the income effect in the Komi Republic and the Arkhangelsk, Vologda, Novgorod, and Pskov regions, and Saint Petersburg. This led to a decrease in the total volume of polluted wastewater discharge.

A decrease in electricity consumption in the Republic of Karelia and the Pskov region is explained by the effect of the technology factor and the ensuing reduction in environmental intensity. An increase in electricity consumption across all the study area (with the exception of the Murmansk region) is accounted for by the affluence factor.

Table 3

The income and technology effects and industrial and household waste dynamics

Waste generation dynamics	region	Impact on wastes generation, 1,000 tonnes		
		Income effect	Technology effect	
		positive	positive	negative
Reduction	Murmansk region	99 487.0		-122 366.1
Growth	Republic of Karelia	38 585.0		-20 871.3
	Komi Republic	1 941.0	876.3	
	Arkhangelsk region	7 575.4	787 870.7	
	Vologda region	5 473.9		-4 244.6
	Kaliningrad region	93.4	296.9	
	Leningrad region	466.4	3 677.7	
	Novgorod region	409.5	617.3	
	Pskov region	53.7	388.7	
	Saint Petersburg city	1 037.0	2 595.5	

Table 4

**The income and technology effects and the dynamics
of carbon dioxide emissions**

Dynamics of CO ₂ emissions	region	Impact on CO ₂ emissions, tonnes		
		Income effect	Technology effect	
		positive	positive	negative
Reduction	Komi Republic	70.9		-123.1
	Kaliningrad region	1.6		-2.1
	Murmansk region	9.7		-3.2
	Pskov region	3.9		-5.1
Growth	Republic of Karelia	4.6		-3.6
	Arkhangelsk region	44.7		-83.0
	Vologda region	107.0		-105.9
	Leningrad region	9.7		-3.2
	Novgorod region	6.3		-3.2
	Saint Petersburg city	4.9		-4.8

Table 5

The income and technology effects and surface discharge dynamics

Surface discharge dynamics	region	Effect on wastewater discharge, million m ³		
		Income effect	Technology effect	
		positive	positive	negative
Reduction	Komi Republic	43.1		-50.2
	Arkhangelsk region	129.2		-161.8
	Vologda region	62.1		-80.7
	Murmansk region	153.2		-144.9
	Novgorod region	31.4		-46.4
	Pskov region	17.0		-23.6
	Saint Petersburg city	337.1		-593.1
Growth	Republic of Karelia	59.8		-27.1
	Kaliningrad region	20.2		-10.9
	Leningrad region	71.0		-37.9

The dominant influence of the technology factor led to a decrease in clean water consumption across the NWFD regions.

Conclusion

The economy of the NWFD regions is becoming increasingly green. The ongoing technological change leads to greater resource efficiency and lower environmental intensity. This results in a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions and fresh water and energy consumption. However, new technology has not produced a fundamental change in the current development trajectory. It is necessary to employ best practices, particularly, in waste management. Stimulating recycling and the use of recyclables, ensuring greater presence in the world recyclables market, and promoting circular economy business models would have a positive effect on the economy and environment of Russia's North-West. Another important factor is environmental behaviour. Thus, growing affluence should go hand in hand with greater environmental awareness and the transformation of values from consumption to conservation. The literature shows (see [30]) that consumer awareness of environmentally friendly products has a positive effect on the formation of a green market and green entrepreneurship, as well as on sustainable development studies.

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**COASTAL
AGGLOMERATIONS
AND THE
TRANSFORMATION
OF NATIONAL
INNOVATION SPACES**

*A. S. Mikhaylov*¹



In this article, I discuss the role of coastal agglomerations in the territorial heterogeneity of the world economy and the global innovation space. I pay particular attention to how proximity to the sea and ocean coasts influences the dynamics of innovation processes. I analyse coastalisation (the movement of economic activity and population to coastal zones) by considering the effects and inland diffusion of the exceptionally high innovative potential of coastal agglomerations. I put forward the hypothesis that coastal agglomerations are the most important transformational elements of a national innovation system. Further, I outline and systematise findings dealing with the specifics of innovative processes taking place in coastal agglomerations under the influence of the agglomerative and coastal factors. The result of this study is a comparison and assessment of the mutual influence of the two effects of spatial development that translate into the unique identity of coastal zone cities: urbanisation and coastalisation.

Keywords: innovation space, coastal agglomeration, innovation diffusion, innovation geography, urbanization, coastalisation

Introduction

Innovation activities are spread unevenly across the globe: a third of R&D and a fourth of all highly skilled jobs are located in just 10 % of NUTS 2 regions (*Bundesländer*, *voivodeships*). This disproportion persists at the local level: 58 % of patents are filed in 10 % of lower

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level regions with an innovative clustering and networking radius of up to 200 km.¹ This equally applies to Russia, almost no matter which statistical indicator is considered. The reason lies in the fact that the economic-geographical positions, the development of infrastructure, investment attractiveness, innovation potential, and other factors differ from region to region [1–4]. Space compression and concentration processes do not occur at similar rates either. For example, Tatyana Nefedova [5] cites the data suggesting that over 40 % of Russia's European municipalities are depressed and they are becoming increasingly peripheral in comparison to the cores.

Similar heterogeneity in development is observed in coastal agglomerations, which play an important role as regards foreign economic ties, transport, logistics, geopolitics, and innovation. A proof of the fact that coastal regions have favourable conditions for innovation is the range of successful forms of spatial networking: innovation clusters, science parks, R&D and technological innovation hubs, as well as others, most of them, however, do not relate to the maritime sector. These are Silicon Valley (US), Medicon Valley (Denmark–Sweden), the Bayan Lepas Free Industrial Zone (Malaysia), the Zhongguancun technology hub (China), the Guro Digital Industrial Complex (South Korea), and the Otaniemi Science Park (Finland). Coastalisation causes economic activities to gravitate towards the sea and human, financial, industrial, and infrastructural resources to concentrate in coastal regions. As to infrastructure, this concerns primarily transport and logistics, since 90 % of international trade is carried via sea ports. As a global phenomenon, coastalisation is drawing the attention of geoeconomic powers (the UK, China, the US, Japan, and others) to the sea factor.

Despite the growing role of coastal regions and cities as polarisation cores, there is a lack of comprehensive research into the innovative development of coastal agglomerations and their effect on the contiguous inland regions. The effect of the sea factor on regional innovative activities has been poorly investigated. Innovative processes at the level of cities are examined much less than those at higher levels of aggregation. However, the latter provide

¹ *OECD. Regions and Innovation: Collaborating across Borders, OECD Reviews of Regional Innovation, OECD Publishing, 2013. DOI: 10.1787/9789264205307-en*



less information for a detailed map of an innovation space. In this article, I will systematise an array of data obtained from studying innovative processes affected by the agglomerative and coastal factors. I will address the patterns of spatial innovative development as affected by urbanisation and coastalisation – two acknowledged factors that cause coastal agglomerations to grow.

Spatial heterogeneity in current economic conditions

The polarisation of geospace, which manifests itself in such terms as regional divergence, disproportion, asymmetry, spatial inequality, geographical inhomogeneity, interregional differentiation, territorial dispersion, and others associated with different levels of aggregation (between countries, regions, cities, and urban and rural areas) has been the focus of academic discussion since the 1950s. If using a broad interpretation, one can distinguish two groups of factors contributing to heterogeneous spatial development (fig. 1). The first group comprises natural factors that exist independently from human occupation (yet they are adapted to human needs) and characterise the environment. These are climate conditions, geographical position (including that in relation to other countries and regions), mineral deposits, terrain and elevation, waterways, soil quality, etc. Sergey Shanin [6] calls the natural resources potential the key measure used in typologies of Russian regions' heterogeneity. The second group comprises social factors, which can be divided into three groups.

Anthropogenic factors reflect the levels of human occupation and technological development. To measure these factors, researchers analyse the availability of utilities (electricity, water supply, central heating), access to social infrastructure (healthcare, education, and other institutions), the spread of ICT (Internet coverage and broadband quality), road density and quality, development of other thoroughfares ensuring the cohesion of a region and connecting it to the outer world, the availability of bridges, ports, railway stations, and airports, the proportion of urban population, etc.

Institutional factors relate to the development of society and social institutions, the quality of education and healthcare, crime and corruption rates, population mobility (including labour mobility), the proportion of banking and insurance services.

Intellectual factors are those related to human capital, business climate, innovation environment (industrial atmosphere), and inter-organisational cooperation, including that between business and academia. The methodological factors of the *anthropogenic* subgroup are evaluated based on whether they are present and, if so, to what extent, the *institutional* factors based on their quality and to what degree they meet the ideal, and the factors of the *intellectual* subgroup based on the primarily qualitative analysis of the elements of the regional ecosystem. The ecosystem is divided into competitive clusters, which express the identity of a territorial unit.

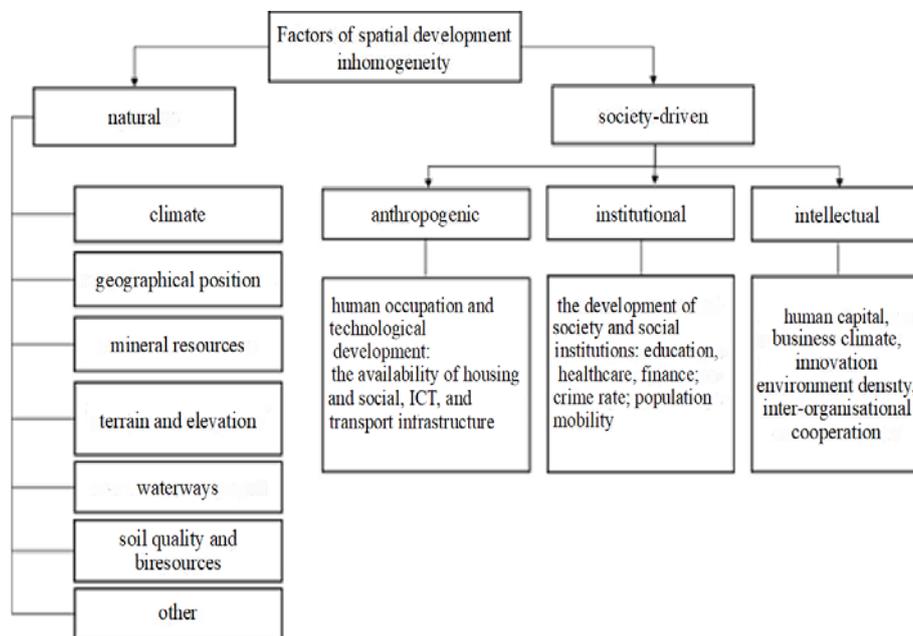


Fig. 1. Factors of heterogeneous spatial development

The above typology suggests that spatial inequality is dynamic and non-linear. The fundamental ideas about the determinants and patterns of this process are outlined in the works of Simon Kuznets [7]. He proposed an inverted U-shaped relation between income inequality and economic growth in industrialising countries, where income gap reaches its maximum at first and narrows later. This wave-like trajectory is a product of a limited pool of investment beneficiaries. However, the number of beneficiar-



ies grows as more people become employed in manufacturing. This often translates into the rapid development of areas with intensive economic activities: cities and urban agglomerations. In extrapolating the patterns of social inequality caused by economic development to geospace inequality, Jeffrey G. Williamson [8] was one of the first to verify the Kuznets curve hypothesis based on a study of development dynamics across twenty-four countries. His central idea was that, in countries generating wealth and income, unequal distribution of major natural resources of industrialisation² leads to growing regional disparities or regional divergence. At later stages, incomes have wider distribution, and this leads to inequality reduction or regional convergence. Recent studies into the socioeconomic heterogeneity of the Baltic region sates confirm the applicability of the U-curve, although with a skew towards large coastal cities [9].

Note that the disproportion in spatial development is considered inevitable (and even strategically beneficial in a national context [10]). However, if the ultimate goal is the removal of inequality in economic development, the proposed cyclicity seems to be merely notional (fig. 2). Circular dependence between social and economic factors means that low competitiveness of the economy complicates the recruitment of talents and precludes an increase in labour productivity. This reduces the competitiveness of the economy. This dependence translates into the depletion of local resources and their concentration in core areas. The subsequent redistribution of goods does not compensate for this disparity [11–12]. The reason lies in the limited geography of the diffusion of positive externalities and differences between old and new capital. The inflow of new investment, particularly, FDI, makes it possible for local companies to embrace new technology (partly, as a result of reverse engineering), to improve competencies, to create new value chains, to conduct more R&D, etc. Regions that draw and deplete resource will always outperform those experiencing the reverberations of this development [13; 14].

² Williamson sees the distribution of natural resources, in particular, the availability of coal and ore, the major cause of geospace inequality. Further factors affecting disparities are the national policy, capital mobility, labour migration, and interregional cohesion.

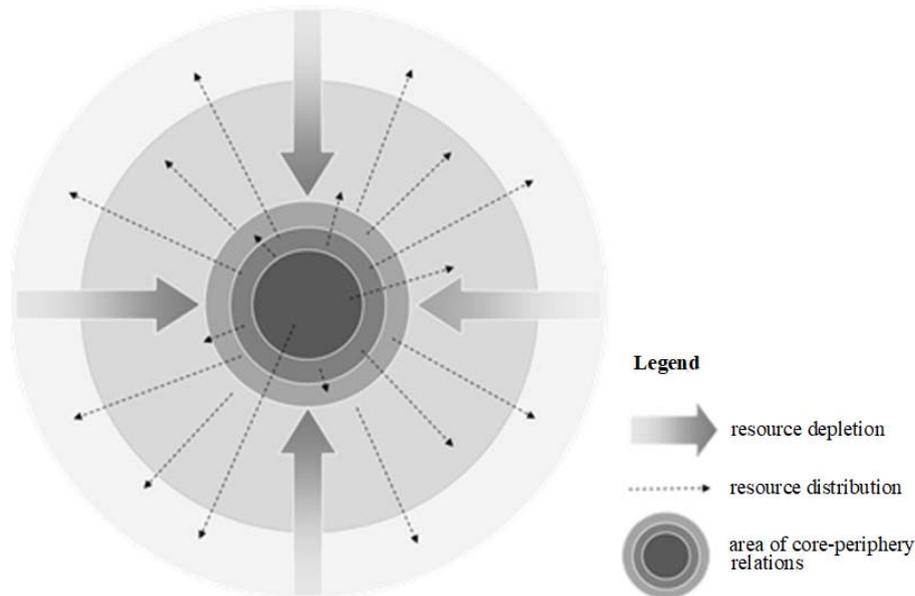


Fig. 2. Depletion and distribution effect in the context of core-periphery relations

With greater mobility of goods, capital, and people, sweeping globalisation created new urgency to the factor of location, which accounts for the competitive advantage of large agglomerations. Territories with a high concentration of economic activities ensure growth, which, in its turn, leads to an increase in the density of economic agents and further strengthening of economic activities [15; 16]. Location should be considered both as a competitive advantage, similarly to the technological and resource capacity, and as a source of heterogeneity. According to Neil Smith, equalising geographical advantages would result in perfect convergence [17]. Thus, the redistribution of resources has a complex configuration: unidirectional movement towards core regions does not take place. On the one hand, human, intellectual, and financial resources are depleted to concentrate in the cores of different levels. On the other hand, such concentration makes it possible to achieve a multiplier effect and to spur the development of satellite regions with insufficient economic potential and competitiveness. As a rule, such systems of relations are introduced on purpose and agreed on by all (or most) regions involved. A change in the de-



velopment trajectory means the core focusing on other regions and satellites adapting to the emergence of a new core. However, this process is complicated by deep-rooted socioeconomic and institutional ties. These may lead obstructions from trade unions and other institutions, from transport infrastructure and settlement system, from production processes within value-adding communities, and other factors.

The emergence of new centres of economic growth, which supplement and often replace old industrial centres, provides researchers with new evidence of the overriding importance of new economic growth factors: R&D capacity, human capital, cross-industry clusters and their effects, institutional conditions encouraging long-term high-risk investment, and hi-tech startups as the building blocks of the knowledge economy. The availability of coal, ore, peat, and other deposits becomes a factor inhibiting the innovative development of a territory. A vivid example is Germany's North-Rhine Westphalia. Catalysts of innovative activities are a developed social and academic infrastructure, a mild climate, a high-quality transport network, functional allied service industries, and other factors that contribute to the emergence of an innovative ecosystem and attract communities of innovators seeking to build high-tech small and medium businesses. Despite the focus being shifted from natural resources and fixed assets to human intellectual capital (together with spatial capital), a dramatic change is yet to come: spatial systems of economies in areas of long-term human occupation are very stable, as compared to the underdeveloped infrastructure of peripheries (see [18; 19]). A more likely option here is a transformation in the form of transition to an innovative economy.

Of interest is the development of coastal agglomerations, whose transformation manifests itself in a declining role of traditional maritime activities: shipbuilding, ship repair, fishing, and aquaculture. Marina van Geenhuizen and Piet Rietveld [20] emphasise that only a small proportion of port facilities have withstood global competition. Many of them have to find new niches in which the region has a competitive edge of significant growth potential. The changing role of the maritime component in the economies of coastal regions has not undermined the dominant position of these territories. This raises questions as to the source of their superiority.



Coastalisation and regional growth: coastal regions and spatial heterogeneity

Two-thirds of all cities of the world are located in the coastal zones of seas and oceans [21]. Population density in these cities is 2.5–3 times higher than that in their inland counterparts [22; 23]. Migration towards coastal regions is common to both developed and developing countries. For instance, population growth in Southern European cities has increased by 80 % over the past fifty years [24]. The suburban expansion of coastal cities has been registered in other parts of Europe [25–27]. Gravitation towards the sea has been observed throughout the history of humanity, and this process is not slowing down today. Coastal population is expected to account for three quarters of the population of the earth in the future [23; 28]. Occupying 12 % of the total dry land area, the coastal zone accounts for 45 % of the world economy [29].

Coastal regions, which are located in the frontier of international collaborations, act as contact zones in resource distribution. Centres of international trade, coastal regions support the logistics of commodity flows, accommodate financial centres, and have a developed tertiary sector, particularly, as regards banking and insurance services. At the same time, the development of the services sector is strongly correlated with that of port facilities [30]. Large ports have a positive effect on the national economy as a whole. Interregional flows from Hamburg reach Germany's southern regions, and those from Le Havre reach the Paris agglomeration. Ports, having a narrow specialisation, contribute primarily to the development of regional economies. Good examples are the port facilities of Rotterdam and Antwerp [31]. Greater openness of coastal regions translates into economic growth and reduces regional divergence [32]. An important factor here is intensive international cooperation, which comes to the fore when trade is liberalised and international industrial integration (including that at trans-basin level) enjoys institutional support.

In coastal zones, innovative development has the most pronounced effect on cities and agglomerations. Richard Florida identifies five US agglomerations that excel in innovations. Four of them are coastal: Boston, San Diego, San Francisco, and Seat-



tle [36]. The concentration of resources in coastal cities is accelerated by the obvious geographical limitations of coastal zones. However, the latter makes it possible to explore patterns in local economic and settlement systems. Encouraging high-tech companies to locate their businesses near ports is an internationally recognised strategy for creating port-city innovation systems. Examples include Montreal (Canada) and Rotterdam (the Netherlands) [37].

When studying the role played by ports in the diffusion of innovations, researchers usually focus on the functioning of maritime clusters as industrial complexes, agglomerations of inter-linked industries, and community-based networks [38], all of them unlocking the competitive potential of coastal zones. This approach can be instrumental in evaluating the resource function of a coastal territory only. It does not take into account the changing significance of coastal position. Still a driver of economic development, the sea is ceasing to be a mere source of marine bio-resources and turning into a beneficial factor for running a business and supporting a comfortable living. Case studies of the port city of Quebec show that most knowledge-based businesses operate in allied industries rather than in the maritime sector proper [39]. This means that activities relating to maritime transport and marine bio-resources cannot facilitate the innovative development of a coastal zone without the development of all the elements of the region's innovative system. However, the presence of a port means a higher concentration and more rapid circulation of resources, active migration, greater tolerance, and openness to novelties and changes. All these factors create a space of intensive transboundary and trans-basin inter-organisational contacts [40–42]. From this perspective, a peculiar feature of coastal innovative development is the cross-influence of several phenomena: coastalisation, multi-transboundariness, and urbanisation.

Conclusions

An objective feature of today's innovative space is its heterogeneity at the interregional and intraregional levels, where a special role is assigned to cities – major cores and attractors of

resources. Geoeconomic studies view the gravitation of people, ideas, and capital towards cities as a distinctive characteristic of the spatial development of today's world economy. Cities and agglomerations are major generators of national wealth. They provide a favourable environment for the development of infrastructure, commercial investment, industrialisation, employment, in-migration, logistics and commerce, education, consumer marketing, and culture. Moreover, they function as living labs for testing new economic, healthcare, educational, and environmental solutions. Effective management of urban environments, using self-improvement mechanisms and national policy tools, often provides a strong impetus to innovations and their diffusion.

Despite its peripheral status, coastal position facilitates the development of coastal cities and regions. Populated very early in human history, most coastal zones are areas of long-term human occupation. At the same time, new technological paradigms do not cause these areas to lag behind or decline. Flexible coastal economies are adapting to current market requirements. Close integration with global migration, financial, and commodity flows makes it possible to upgrade production processes and business services, to modernise fixed assets, and to recruit new talent. Over-concentration followed by clustering translates into lower costs (as regards purchasing and transporting raw materials), access to developed infrastructure and labour markets, more effective R&D supported by intra-industry or inter-organisational cooperation, joint internationalisation or internal market protection measures, and benefits derived from competition. Hubs for global value chains, coastal cities play an important role in national economies and innovations. Coastal regions outstrip their inland counterparts as regards the transition from low-value-added activities to independent innovative potential. To become integrated into international value-adding communities, these territories receive substantial FDI, welcome international companies, and accumulate competencies – all this being crucial for innovations.

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POLITICS



THE POLISH MINORITY IN THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA: INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL FACTORS

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The ethnic makeup of the population significantly affects the domestic policy of any state, and its relations with neighbouring countries. Although interactions with ethnic minorities are not as urgent a problem in Lithuania as they are in the two other Baltic States, ethnicity-related conflicts continue to occur, particularly, as regards the relations between the Lithuanian state and the Polish minority, which is the largest in the country. The Polish minority – Lithuania – Poland relations are not the only factor that affects the situation of the Poles in Lithuania. The other important factors are Lithuania and Poland' EU membership, the relations between Lithuania and Russia, and the Russian minority in Lithuania. Our analysis shows that the EU membership of Lithuania and Poland did not provide an instant solution to the problem of the Polish minority but rather attenuated it. Although the EU factor played a significant role before the accession of Poland and Lithuania to the Union, its influence is very limited today. The effect of the Russian factor is different. Strained Polish-Russian relations do not affect the relations between the Polish and Russian minorities in Lithuania. On the contrary, both minorities collaborate on a wide range of issues.

Keywords: ethnic minorities, Polish minority in Lithuania, Lithuania, Poland, European Union, Russia

Introduction

Policies of national governments towards ethnic diversity

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are considered the key to peace and democracy in Europe [1, p. 5–16]. European countries have worked out many mechanisms, which are used to manage ethnic minority problems. European governments react very differently to national security problems, domestic political competition, political representation, and economic redistribution. Moreover, the situation of ethnic minorities is an important gauge of the development of a liberal democratic system. This applies even more so to the states where nation-building has not been completed.

In Central and Eastern Europe (CEE), most ethnic groups have close ties with their neighbouring 'countries of origin'. This may cause considerable tension between states and increase the risk of international conflicts. Although the constitutions of all 'new' EU member states, which have acceded the EU since 2004, protect the rights of ethnic (national) minorities, the situation of the latter differs significantly from country to country in CEE [2, p. 40].

All the above equally applies to the Baltics. Overall, the situation of ethnic minorities in Lithuania is regarded as more favourable than that in the neighbouring Latvia and Estonia. Despite the relatively low level of discrimination in the country, Lithuania's Polish and Russian minorities complain about discrimination from the Lithuanian government as regards a number of issues, including the insufficient financing of minority educational and cultural institutions, Lithuanisation of Polish names, and renaming streets in Polish communities. However, unlike those in Estonia and Latvia, national minorities in Lithuania were granted citizenship immediately after independence, and they have never faced an outright discriminatory passport policy.

In this article, we will examine the situation of the Polish minority in Lithuania. The historical development of CEE countries resulted in incongruence between ethnic nations and states. At the same time, for the peoples of these countries, congruence between ethnic groups and states is an ideal and evidence of the maturity and sovereignty of a nation-state. This approach is fraught with disappointment, tension, and conflicts. Rogers Brubaker has proposed to rely on several premises when studying the triangle of relations between the state pursuing nation-building, the ethnic minority living in this state, and the 'country of origin' of the minority. His approach identifies the completion of nation-building and the attainment of full-fledged statehood as priorities for a state pursuing nation-building. Ethnic minorities call for the state to recognise their special ethnic identity and grant them special cultural and political rights. In our research, this applies to the Polish minority in Lithuania. At the same time, minorities strive for recognition as full members of the ethnic nation of the 'state of origin'. Poland is not an exception [2]. Brubaker's model provides a suitable framework for our analysis since it suggests ex-



amining relations between the three most significant actors. However, a limitation of this model is that it relies on the assumption of a closed system (two states and a minority). In reality, this system is open to external influences. Therefore, we supplement Brubaker's model with two factors, which we consider essential. These are Lithuania's Russian minority and the country's geographic proximity to Russia. We maintain that the situation of an ethnic minority within a nation-state and the structure of its interests are affected by both the relations between the three principal actors and external factors (the EU and Russia, in our case). This makes relations and interconnections even more complex and less predictable.

The structure of this article is as follows. The first three sections focus on relations between the three main actors: between Lithuania and Poland, the Polish minority and the Lithuanian state, and between the minority and the 'country of origin' – Poland. The fourth section of the article analyses limitations and opportunities for the three actors relating to Lithuania and Poland's EU membership. The fifth section considers the role of the Russian factor (and the Russian minority) in Lithuania from the perspective of its effect on the situation of the Polish minority. In the conclusion, we summarise the findings.

Lithuania and Poland: intergovernmental relations

Relations between Lithuania and Poland escape a clear-cut definition. On the one hand, they are allies, members of NATO and the EU, which suggest a high level of mutual political loyalty. On the other hand, there are historically embedded differences between these countries. These concern the problem of Vilnius and the Vilnius region and Lithuania's policy towards ethnic minorities [3, pp. 18–24].

Relations between these countries are affected by their historical background. Firstly, Lithuania and Poland once constituted one state – the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. The Commonwealth was established by the Union of Lublin in 1569. Lithuanians consider it a dark page in the history of their state since the Union granted greater rights and possibilities to the Polish nobility than to the Lithuanian aristocracy [4, pp. 63–67].

Secondly, an important historical landmark in relations between Lithuania and Poland was the inter-war period (1917–1940), especially its end. Lithuania faced a serious crisis after the beginning of World War II. In 1939–1940, the country had to receive over 27,000 refugees from Poland. Both Polish refugees and the Soviet-supported return of Vilnius in October 1939, which followed the occupation of Poland, had a profound effect on Lithuania's policy towards Polish migrants [5, pp. 461–462]. This made conflict-free relations between Lithuania and Poland or Lithuania pursuing an equitable policy towards the Polish minority very unlikely. A series of discriminatory measures against Poles living in Lithuania was introduced in 1940.

Approximately 83 thousand Poles were deprived of their civil rights. All the refugees who had not been able to register were imprisoned – many of them were Poles. Vilnius was consistently Lithuanised. Any measure aimed at reducing the political participation of refugees (and, later, all newcomers) or at cutting refugee support spending was welcome [5, p. 462, 465, 468, 474]. All this was happening against the background of the war raging in Europe and the allies condemning Lithuania's policy towards refugees.

Today, both countries are members of NATO and the EU. Ties between Poland and Lithuania are very close across many fields – military, economic, political, and others. Moreover, the two countries have developed bilateral ties within various institutions: advisory bodies, parliamentary exchanges, etc. These collaborations focus primarily on cross-border issues and culture. The bilateral efforts between Lithuania and Poland include the Advisory Committee of the Presidents of Poland and Lithuania, the Parliamentary Assembly of Poland and Lithuania (established in 1997), and the International Commission on Cross-Border Cooperation between Lithuania and Poland (1996) [3, p. 20]. Moreover, Poland and Lithuania collaborate on issues concerning relations with the Russian Federation. The ties between the two states owe their strength to the fact that their collaborations are supported by institutions of both executive and legislative power at both intergovernmental and local levels. However, close cooperation does not cancel problems in bilateral relations, the Vilnius issue being the most complicated one. From the early 20th century, the two countries were laying their claims to Vilno (today's Vilnius and its environs [6]. In 1920, Poland managed to occupy temporarily these territories. This resulted in the severance of diplomatic ties between the states. Researchers have emphasised that the Vilno conflict and the ensuing occupation of the city by Polish troops were a result of tensions that had been accumulating for decades because of the inequitable distribution of rights, privileges, and representation between the two nations in the commonwealth of Poland and Lithuania [7, p. 21]. This conflict caused Lithuanians to develop a special attitude towards surrounding larger countries and to preserve jealously their identity and territory.

Nevertheless, after the demise of the Soviet Union, Lithuania and Poland managed to find common grounds for building good-neighbourly relations. In 1994, the two countries signed a treaty on good-neighbourly relations and cooperation. Articles 13, 14, and 15 of the document ensure equal rights to the Lithuanian and Polish minorities living in Poland and Lithuania respectively.¹

¹ 1994, *Lietuvos Respublikos ir Lenkijos Respublikos draugisku santykiu ir gero kaimyninio bendradarbiavimo sutartis* [Treaty between Lithuania and Poland on Friendly Relations and Good-Neighbourly Cooperation], available at <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.11154> (accessed 29 August 2018). (In Lith.)

Lithuania and the Polish minority

An inseparable part of Lithuania's population, the Polish diaspora is the largest ethnic minority in the country. In 2009, Poles accounted for 6.1 % of the national population. Vilnius and the Vilnius region are home to the greatest proportion of the minority – approximately 200,000 people.² The dynamics of population change in Lithuania in 2011 – 2018 suggests that, despite a continuous decline in both the total population and national minorities in Lithuania, the percentage of the Polish population of the country remains at 6 %. In 2001, Lithuania's population was 3,483,972 people, 234,989 of them were Poles (6.7 % of the total population).³ Ten years later, in 2011, the total population decreased to 3,043,429 people, whereas the number of Poles was 200,317 people (6.6 %).⁴ In the first decade of the 21st century, the total number of Poles decreased by 14.8 %. By 2018, the total population of Lithuania reduced to 2,800,738 people⁵ (the 2016–2018 statistics suggest the Lithuania population decreased from 2,870,351 to 2,800,738 people⁶). However, the number of Polish population remained significant in relevant terms – at approximately 6 %. The reduction in the number of Poles living in Lithuania, which was observed over the past fourteen years, is accounted for by the country's accession to the EU. The borders were opened for free movement, and records of exits were not tracked anymore. This means that the Polish population of Lithuania is a significant factor in the politics, economy, and social life of the state.

Associated with a range of problems, this factor has a negative effect on relations between Lithuania and Poland. As early as 1995, the

² In 2011, Vilnius was home to 88,000 Poles (16.5% of the total population), and Poles accounted for the 60% of the total population of the Vilnius region. 2009, Lietuvos gyventojai 2009 metais. 2009 m. gyventojų sarasymo duomenys [2009 census in Lithuania], Lietuvos statistikos departamentas, available at <https://osp.stat.gov.lt/gyventojai1> (accessed 1 August 2018). (In Lith.)

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⁵ 2018, Lietuvos gyventojai 2018 metais. 2018 m. gyventojų sarasymo duomenys [2018 census in Lithuania], Lietuvos statistikos departamentas, available at <https://osp.stat.gov.lt/gyventojai1> (accessed 1 August 2018). (In Lith.)

⁶ 2016, Lietuvos gyventojai 2016 metais. 2016 m. gyventojų sarasymo duomenys [2016 census in Lithuania], Lietuvos statistikos departamentas, available at <https://osp.stat.gov.lt/gyventojai1> (accessed 1 August 2018). (In Lith.)

EU adopted the Balladur Plan, which obligated candidate countries to approach a solution to national minority problems by concluding bilateral agreements with their neighbours [8]. In 1994, Poland and Lithuania, which would accede to the EU simultaneously in 2004, signed a bilateral agreement. The document ensured the possibilities of obtaining an education in Polish in Polish-populated areas of Lithuania and installing bilateral street signs in these regions, as well as the preservation of the original Polish spelling of names in official Lithuania documents [9]. However, the problem has not been solved. Lithuania pursues a tough policy towards national minorities, especially the Polish one. It is becoming increasingly more difficult for minorities to get an education in their native languages. The Lithuanian government has introduced a number of restrictions relating to national minorities. In 2011, the number of schools having a right to teach in the languages of national minorities decreased. This happened soon after the adoption of the new law on education. The law increased the number of hours of the Lithuanian language. Among other things, history and geography had to be taught in Lithuanian even at minorities' schools.⁷ Obviously, the policy followed by the Lithuanian authorities is at odds with the 1994 bilateral agreement and the Constitution of Lithuania. Article 27 of the latter guarantees the right of minorities for the preservation of their native languages, as well as for obtaining an education in these languages.⁸

On the other hand, the Lithuanian state is very liberal when it comes to ethnic organisations and political alliances. In this country, it is permitted to establish political parties based on the ethnic principle. The largest of these political groups are the Lithuanian Union of Russians, the Russian Alliance, and the Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania. These parties have formed a bloc to promote the interests of ethnic minorities more effectively.

The Electoral Action of Poles traditionally receives the percentage of the vote that roughly corresponds to the proportion of the Polish population in the country (5–7%). In the 2016 Seimas election, the Electoral Action of Poles won three seats (5.84% of votes) together with the Christian Families Alliance.⁹ The party's greatest success was achieved in the regional and municipal elections in Vilnius and the Vilnius region: 31

⁷ 2011, *Lietuvos Respublikos švietimo įstatymo pakeitimo įstatymas* [Changing Law on Lithuania's Education Law], available at <https://e-seimas.lrs.lt/portal/legalAct/lt/TAD/TAIS.395105> (accessed 29 August 2018). (In Lith.)

⁸ *Lietuvos Respublikos Konstitucija* [The Constitution of Lithuania], available at: http://www3.lrs.lt/home/Konstitucija/Konstitucija.htm#II_SKIRSNIS_ŽMOGUS_IR_VALSTYBĖ (accessed 29 August 2018). (In Lith.)

⁹ 2016, *2016 m. Seimo rinkimu rezultatai* [Lithuanian parliament election-2016 results], available at: <http://www.vrk.lt/2016-seimo/rezultatai?srcUrl=/rinkimai/102/1/1304/rezultatai/lt/rezultataiSuvestine1.html> (accessed 29 August 2018). (In Lith.)

and 41 seats respectively were won by members of the Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania. This is quite logical since Vilnius and the Vilnius region are home to more than half of Lithuania's Poles.¹⁰

The good neighbourly relations developed by Lithuania and Poland at the level of institutional collaborations do not attenuate the harsh rhetoric of Lithuanian politicians against politically active members of the Polish diaspora.

For example, in 2014, the future Prime Minister of Lithuania, Algirdas Butkevičius, deprecated the claims of the leader of the Electoral Action of Poles, Valdemar Tomaševski, who, not without a reason, accused the Lithuanian government of pursuing a discriminatory policy towards the Polish diaspora living in the country. Butkevičius both rejected the allegation of the leader of Lithuanian Poles and accused him of lacking politics culture. The President of Lithuania, Dalia Grybauskaitė, denounced Tomaševski for trying to discredit Lithuania in the international arena.¹¹ In one of his interviews, Tomaševski said that, although he always tried to participate in the dialogue with other politicians, all his attempts to do so with President Grybauskaitė were futile since she 'dismisses any alternative opinion and has to be the only one in the right'.¹² The same year, the Electoral Action of Poles was excluded from the ruling coalition [10]. Earlier, they had been forbidden from presenting a bill on national minorities to the Seimas. Commenting on this, the leader of the Electoral Action of Poles faction, Rita Tamašunienė, said that the coalition partners of the party had revealed their true face.¹³

The points raised by Tomaševski in 2014 were no news. In 2010, the US Department of State published a report on human rights practices across the world. The document stated that Lithuania's govern-

¹⁰ 2015, 2015 m. Lietuvos Respublikos savivaldybių tarybų rinkimų rezultatai [Lithuanian local parliaments election-2015 results], available at: http://www.vrk.lt/statiniai/puslapiai/2015_savivaldybiu_tarybu_rinkimai/output_lt/rinkimu_diena/stat1.html (accessed 29 August 2018). (In Lith.)

¹¹ 2014, PM Butkevičius evaluates Tomasevski's EP statements as 'lack of political culture', *Lietuvos nacionalinis radijas ir televizija* [Lithuania's national radio and television], available at: <https://www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/29/33922/pm-butkevicius-evaluates-tomasevski-s-ep-statements-as-lack-of-political-culture> (accessed 4 November 2018).

¹² 2014, V. Tomasevski is chasing D. Grybauskaitė after Strasbourg: she will be ashamed if I tell what she has commented on, *DELFI Zinios* [DELFI News], available at: <https://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/europietis/d-grybauskaitė-po-strasbura-vaikesis-v-tomasevskis-jai-bus-geda-jei-pasakysiu-ka-ji-komentavo.d?id=63750742> (accessed 4 November 2018). (In Lith.)

¹³ 2014, Meanness and Cynicism in Lithuania: Baltic States in Polish Mass Media, *REGNUM*, available at: <https://regnum.ru/news/polit/1817157.html> (accessed 4 November 2018). (In Russ.)

mental responses to ethnic discrimination were ineffective and that insufficient attention was given to the problem. In 2009, there was not a single representative of ethnic minorities in the Seimas or the Government. Although Lithuania adopted a national anti-discriminatory programme for 2009–2011, the situation did not change dramatically. In 2009, the new programme did not receive funding, and 39 cases of hate crime were investigated, which was half the 2010 number. According to the report, compensations paid to victims of discrimination were either insufficient or not provided at all.¹⁴

All this seems to be a logical consequence of the events of the 1990s. On October 6, 1990, Lithuania's Poles attempted to establish a Polish national region as part of the country. This sparked a strong reaction from Lithuanians, and Poles were accused by the Prosecution Service of an illegal attempt to establish an autonomy. Later, the conflict was resolved, and Polish Lithuanians were granted the right to use their language in minority-dominated areas. However, in the documents, their names had to be spelt using Lithuanian orthography. The latter only aggravated the conflict, so did the constant promises of Lithuanian president to solve the problem. None of these promises was ever fulfilled [11].

Despite Lithuania's and Poland's membership in the same international alliances, a common historical background, and the uniting factor of the Russian 'threat', the governing institutions of Lithuania supplement their policy of national cohesion with practices that are discriminatory against other ethnic groups. This has a negative effect on both relations with minorities and the minority's attitudes to state institutions. As a result, the 'countries of origin' are given an opportunity to exert influence on minorities. In particular, this is done by Polish NGOs.

Moreover, Lithuania's policy towards ethnic minorities points to an interesting feature of this state, namely, to the fact that different aspects of liberal democracy develop unevenly in the process of nation-building. The state promotes the institutional aspect of democracy (in our case, a competitive political party system) and yet hinders the liberal aspect by imposing a restriction on diversity (ethnic diversity).

Poland's and Lithuania's Polish minority: channels of influence

There are over twenty active Polish non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Lithuania.¹⁵ NGOs are a principal channel of Polish

¹⁴ Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, 2010 // *Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, U.S. Department of State*. C. 13-21, available at: <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/2010/eur/154435.htm> (accessed 2 November 2018).

¹⁵ <http://www.3sektorius.lt/trecias-sektorius/nvo-duomenu-baze/>

influence on the diaspora in Lithuania. In ‘catering’ to the Polish minority, these NGOs do not cooperate with the Polish state and isolate themselves from it.

As early as 1998, the Republic of Lithuania and the Republic of Poland signed an agreement on cooperation in culture, education, and science. Both parties planned to develop collaborations by involving NGOs in cooperation in these fields. They pay attention to the problems of national minorities in both countries.¹⁶ According to the agreement, NGOs had to act in partnership with the state, on whose territory they operated. However, this did not happen. Most NGOs either did not cooperate with the government of Lithuania or kept this cooperation to a formal minimum.

NGOs operating in Lithuania (not only Polish ones) are funded by the following sources:¹⁷

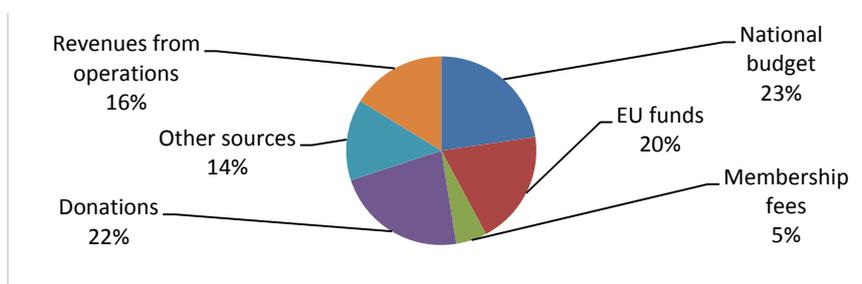


Fig. NGO funging

At least 10 % of NGOs are supported, in part or in full, by foreign funds. As of 2005, approximately half of NGOs operating in Lithuania never submitted financial statements or reports.

Many NGOs do not cooperate with Lithuania’s national institutions. These are charities, NGOs working at a district or international level, organisations located in borderland cities (Vilnius, Marijampolė, Alytus), and organisations fully financed from abroad. One organisation often falls into more than one category (which is often the case with Polish NGOs).¹⁸

¹⁶ 1998, *Lietuvos ir Lenkijos sutartis del bendradarbiavimo kulturos, svietimo ir mokslo srityje* [Lithuania-Poland Treaty on Cooperation in Cultural, Education and Scientific Spheres], available at: <http://www.kpd.lt/lietuvos-respublikos-vyriausybes-ir-lenkijos-respublikos-vyriausybes-sutartis-del-bendradarbiavimo-kulturos-svietimo-ir-mokslo-srityje/> (accessed 29 August 2018). (In Lith.)

¹⁷ Lithuania’s NGOs data base, available at: <http://www.3sektorius.lt/trecias-sektorius/nvo-duomenu-baze/> (accessed 10 August 2018). (In Lith.)

¹⁸ Lithuania’s NGOs website, available at: <http://www.3sektorius.lt> (accessed 10 August 2018). (In Lith.); 2005, *Lithuanian NGOs analysis, Nevyriasybiniu organizaciju informacijos ir paramos centras* [NGOs information organization], pp. 31, available at: http://www.3sektorius.lt/docs/Treciojo_sektorius_instituciju_situacija_Lietuvoje1_2013-01-17_15_28_40.pdf (accessed 9 August 2018). (In Lith.)



A number of 'journals and magazines for Poles' is published in Lithuania:

1. *Ausra/Auszra* (since 1960)¹⁹;
2. *Ausrele* (since 1998);
3. *Suvalkietis* (since 1992");
4. *Saltinis* (1906 – 1915, since 2005);
5. *Demesio* (since March 11, 1990, the day of restoration of independence).

Published in Polish and Lithuanian, these journals and magazines cover events that are of importance to all Poles and perform an educational function. Not all of them have online versions. The journals are brought together by common topics. In the absence of outright conflicts between Lithuania and Poland, these periodicals focus on cultural events.²⁰ Overall, they try to avoid hot international topics and focus mainly on local affairs.

This means that Polish NGOs in Lithuania operate quite successfully without collaborating with the Lithuanian authorities. They use a wide range of means to establish a dialogue with the diaspora and to support it. Polish NGOs hold various events, provide social support for Lithuanian Poles, and back educational initiatives via the Polish-language media. They contribute to a stronger cohesion of the Polish diaspora in Lithuania, which translates into a stable and rather successful (if the proportion of Poles in the Lithuanian population is taken into account) performance of the Electoral Action of Poles in Lithuania in national, regional, and municipal elections. Polish NGOs working in Lithuania have a direct influence on election results by preserving the Polish identity of the diaspora and helping Lithuania's ethnic Poles to defend their political interests at all levels.

The EU factor and the problem of the Polish minority in Lithuania

An important characteristic of transformation processes, which have been taking place in CEE over the past decades, is an unprecedented role of external actors – first of all, the European Union [12, p. 39–50, 43]. The countries of the region got a chance to accede to the EU after the execution of the European Union Association Agreement. A country's eligibility for accession was defined by the

¹⁹ *Ausra* Journal website, available at: <http://e-ausra.pl> (accessed 8 August 2018). (In Lith.)

²⁰ January 2018, *Ausra* Journal, no. 1 (746), available at: <http://e-ausra.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Ausra1.pdf> (accessed 8 August 2018). (In Lith.); August 2018, *Ausra* Journal, no. 15-16 (760-761), available at: <http://e-ausra.pl/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Ausra15.pdf> (accessed 8 August 2018). (In Lith.)



so-called Copenhagen criteria of 1992. A candidate country had to adopt the Community acquis (*aquis communautaire*) and apply the standards of an open democratic society and a rule-of-law state. These standards included respect for human rights and the protection of national minorities.

The European Union has different types of influence when it comes to solving the problems of national minorities. Firstly, there is compulsory influence exerted through the Union's conditionality policy. This influence is actor-driven and aimed at the policy-making level. Secondly, the EU has an enabling influence through political and financial mechanisms that strengthen the social actors who support desired changes in candidate countries. Thirdly, the EU has a connective influence by using a variety of mechanisms of increasing interconnections between countries and societies, bringing them closer together in border regions. This type of influence is oriented towards societies in a much stronger way than towards political or social actors. Finally, the EU has a constructive influence designed to foster deep changes in identification [2, p. 39–50, 43].

Guido Schwellnus, Lilla Balazs, and Liudmila Mikalayeva argue that the compulsory influence of the EU is crucial *before* a country's accession to the EU at the stage when a candidate country tries to regulate its past conflicts and adopt laws on the protection of national minority rights. However, *after* accession, the strongest effect on conflict resolution is exerted by internal factors – primarily, the structure of political institutions [12]. For example, Poland supported Lithuania's EU and NATO membership, and Lithuania adopted a law on national minorities. Accession to the EU was sufficiently important to both countries since they set aside bilateral conflicts. This way, the situation of Lithuania's Polish minority became a latent problem.

After Poland's and Lithuania's accession to the EU, the problem of the Polish minority has been approached constructively. According to Barbara Törnquist-Plewa and Magdalena Góra, the EU offers to its communities and citizens new arenas for expressing concerns and new frames of reference for the search for possible solutions, such as the European Parliament and European Commission [2, p. 47–48].

In March 2011, a lawyer from Gdansk, Tomasz Snarski, submitted a petition to the European Union. In his petition, Snarski raised the problem of the legal discrimination of the Polish minority manifested among other things in the inability to use first and last names in Polish, and the lack of official street and town signs in the native language. In 2012, the European Parliament held a public hearing at which members of the Polish and Lithuanian governments were present. The European Commission prepared two reports on the problem. The European Parliament sent letters to the Lithuanian authori-

ties twice, asking for their comments on the situation.²¹ The Lithuanian authorities, in their turn, repeatedly ensured the European Parliament that all the necessary measures had been taken. In 2017, Snarski filed a second petition – this time, against the discrimination of Lithuanian Poles as regards their language rights and the right to education in their native language. As he put it: ‘until a Pole from Lithuania is not able to open his or her passport and see the name in his/her mother tongue, we cannot tell that we are caring about fundamental rights in the EU. This situation should not arise in the 21st century’.²² The future of the petition depends on support from members of the European Parliament and their subsequent decision. So far, it has been expectedly supported by EP members of Polish origin.

Alongside the European Parliament and the EU Commission, an important channel of influence is bringing the matter to the European Court of Justice. A court action seeking the recognition of the right of Lithuanian Poles to spell their names using Polish orthography in identity documents was filed (the *Runevič-Vardyn* case). However, in 2011, the court ruled that the Lithuanian spelling of Polish names did not contradict the EU laws [13, 14].

The EU cannot expedite a solution to this problem because of the weak European identity of Lithuanian Poles. Numerous surveys show that European identity is not considered important by respondents from Lithuania’s Polish diaspora, the only exception being Poles with higher education. For all the respondents, European identity ranks much lower than their regional and national identities [15, p. 11]. Therefore, it is probable that Lithuanian Poles who are dissatisfied with the *status quo* will be inclined to solve problems by appealing to either the Lithuanian or Polish authorities rather than to the EU institutions.

The problem of Lithuanian Poles was not solved automatically when the two countries acceded to the EU. The EU allows communities suffering from oppression or discrimination to raise awareness of their problems [2, p. 47–48]. Moreover, the EU as a normative force [16, p. 45–60], uses its conditionality policy and its attractiveness for non-member states (a chance of accession has turned into a powerful political tool) to prevent conflicts between majorities and minorities in new member states from deteriorating. In other words,

²¹ 2015, European Parliament about discrimination of Polish people in Lithuania, EFHR Media, available at: <http://media.efhr.eu/2015/05/04/european-parliament-about-discrimination-of-polish-people-in-lithuania-2/> (accessed 30 August 2018).

²² 2017, Situation of polish minorities in Lithuania is a discrimination of EU citizens, EFHR Media, available at: <http://media.efhr.eu/2017/05/09/situation-polish-minorities-lithuania-discrimination-eu-citizens/> (accessed 30 August 2018).

by making conflicts more transparent, the EU manages to keep them at bay (although it is not always the case). At the same time, the very nature of the EU as a political system, in particular, its restrictions on using any forms of coercion, limits the influence that the EU could have on resolving minority problems in member states.

The ‘Russian factor’, Lithuanian Russians and Poles: an unexpected alliance

Lithuanian Russians are the second largest minority in Lithuania, comprising 5.8 % of the total population. The other ethnic groups are much less numerous. However, Lithuania’s Russian minority is much smaller than those in Latvia and Estonia are. After the demise of the USSR, the Lithuanian authorities adopted a much more favourable attitude towards the ethnic group than their counterparts from the other two Baltic States did [17]. Surveys show that most Lithuanian Russians (80 %) attach importance to their ethnic identity [18, p. 9]. Ethnic Russians live primarily in cities – Visaginas, Klaipeda, and Vilnius. The minority consists of two major groups. The first one comprises descendants of Old Believers who moved from the Russian Empire to the Grand Duchy of Lithuania in the 18th century to escape persecution. The second group brings together descendants of Russians who moved to the Lithuanian SSR from other regions of the Soviet Union after World War II [19, pp. 4–5].

One could expect tensions between Poland and Russia to affect relations between the Polish and Russian minorities in Lithuania. However, this is not the case. The two ethnic groups collaborate on a wide range of issues. Experts call it a ‘strange friendship’ [20]. Surveys demonstrate that non-Lithuanians (including Poles) prefer the Russian media to the Lithuanian media. At the same time, 61 % of the country’s national minorities watch Russian television at least once a day. The same survey reveals a remarkable picture: national minorities show greater support for Russia’s policy than the Lithuanian majority does. Only 16 % of minority respondents blame Russia for the conflict in Ukraine, as compared to 55 % among the Lithuanian majority [21]. These results are confirmed by other polls. For example, a survey held in 2017 shows that 64 % of Lithuanian Poles sympathise with President Putin and 40.5 % view the incorporation of Crimea as legitimate.²³ Moreover, the Russian and Polish national minorities rally together against linguistic and educational discrimination by the

²³ 2011, Russians join Poles for minority protest in Lithuania, Radio Poland, available at: <http://www.thenews.pl/1/10/Artykul/55673,Russians-join-Poles-for-minority-protest-in-Lithuania> (accessed 30 August 2018).

Lithuanian authorities.²⁴ Some Lithuanian and Polish experts maintain that the central problem of Lithuanian Poles is neither spelling nor the demands of teachers from Polish schools but the Russification of the country's Polish minority [20].

Here, two questions arise. How did it happen and what can be done? Some Polish experts blame the Lithuanian and Polish authorities for the 'isolation' of the Polish minority from the 'country of origin' and for the gravitation of the ethnic group towards the Russian minority and Russia. According to Daniel Boćkowski, 'the existing Lithuanian politics towards minorities is not a road to nowhere, but a road to complete disaster. Because if people really do not identify themselves with Lithuania, it is not because they suddenly got offended, but because the policy concerning the use of language, culture, the economic policy, property issues ..., resulted in the feeling of rejection' [21]. By neglecting the legitimate demands of minorities and avoiding a clear policy towards them, the Lithuanian authorities encourage cooperation between minorities seeking to solve common problems.

On the other hand, concerned with problems and tensions in Poland, Warsaw views the problems of Polish minorities as a secondary one. Poland lacks an effective Eastern policy, and this is a big strategic mistake. At the same time, Polish experts admit that Russia defends its minorities more effectively, and the country's propaganda works better too. Both the Polish and Russian minorities are rejected by the Lithuanian majority. As a result, conflicts escalate [21].

To improve the situation, it is necessary for Warsaw to revise completely its policy towards Lithuanian Poles. With the Lithuanian authorities lacking an active stance, Warsaw is 'the only viable force'.²⁵ The Polish-Lithuanian bilateral relations are another important factor since conflicts in one field have a tendency to spread to others. The more serious the Polish-Lithuanian conflict, the fewer chances there are that the problem of Lithuanian Poles will have a solution in the near future. At the same time, Warsaw's massive support for the Polish minority in Lithuania may spark a reaction from Vilnius.

Lithuania's attitude to the problem is much more reserved. Most Lithuanian politicians do not consider the Polish and the Russian minorities as catalysts of political tensions and believe that the minority situation in the country is much better than in other post-Soviet states. According to a member of the Seimas, Arvydas Anušauskas, the Polish and the Russian minorities have different agendas: the Russians are closely integrated into Lithuanian society, and their primary concern is economic well-being, whereas the Poles are 'isolating' themselves from the rest, and the issues they raise may transform into open political

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.



demands [22]. A Lithuanian political scientist, Vytautas Dumbliauskas, maintains that the mindset of Russians in Lithuania differs from that of Russians in Russia in being more Western. Lithuanian Russians see the benefits of living in the European Union, namely, freedom of movement and career opportunities. Therefore, their primary focus is on economic rather than political issues [22].

Conclusion

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, Lithuania and Poland managed to find common ground for developing good-neighbourly relations. However, this does not mean that all problems have been solved. One of them is the situation of Lithuania's Polish minority – an important factor in the politics, economy, and social life of the state. In striving to complete the process of nation-building and to attain full statehood, the Lithuanian government employs measures that discriminate ethnic groups. In doing so, it ignores the fact that Lithuania and Poland are members of the same international alliances.

The treatment of the ethnic minority problem by the Lithuanian state reveals an important feature of the emergence and evolution of the country's political system. This is the uneven development of various aspects of liberal democracy. The state promotes the institutional aspect of democracy (in our case, a competitive political party system) and yet hinders the liberal aspect by imposing a restriction on diversity (ethnic diversity, in our case). At the same time, the Lithuanian state and Polish agents of civil society (who serve as a primary link between the minority and the 'country of origin') function independently of each other.

Lithuania's and Poland's EU membership did not solve the problem of the Polish minority by default. However, the EU factor mitigates the problem by making relations more transparent and creating new channels for minorities to express themselves at the supranational level. The EU factor played a very important role before the two countries' accession to the Union. Today, its influence is limited. The Russian factor operates differently. Tensions between Poland and Russia do not affect relations between the Polish and Russian minorities in Lithuania. On the contrary, the two ethnic groups collaborate on a wide range of issues. Overall, external rather than internal factors will have the major influence on the situation of Lithuanian Poles.

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**THE MILITARY
AND POLITICAL
SITUATION
IN THE BALTIC REGION
IN THE LATE 20th/
EARLY 21st CENTURIES:
THE PROSPECTS
OF 'UNEASY PEACE'**

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In this article, we consider the development of international relations in the Baltic region in the late 20th/early 21st centuries. This study aims to analyse the security prospects of the Baltic region in view of the changes in the overall geopolitical situation in Europe and in the relations between Russia and its closest neighbours and the leading NATO countries.

We examine the ideas and forecasts of international and Russian experts relating to the state and dynamics of military security in the region at the first stage of the Baltics' membership in NATO. Another focus is on changes in the strategy of the NATO leadership for the Baltic region as a priority zone of potential warfare and, thus, for the presence of the alliance in the area. We stress that the steps taken by the NATO leadership prompted the Russian side to assign a special role in the country's foreign policy to the Kaliningrad region and to take practical steps to ensure peace and security in the region.

Keywords: international relations, cooperation, politics, security, Baltic region, Russia, Kaliningrad region, USA, NATO

Introduction

After the new administration took over in the US, media outlets started to discuss the possibility of another 'reset' of the Moscow – Washington relations. In September 2017, *The Telegraph* wrote that the Russian side had relayed to the new US leadership a 'roadmap' suggesting 'immediate steps to restore diplomatic, military, and intelligence channels severed between the two countries'. The document was reported to call for 'meetings between the two countries' security service heads, consultations on situations in Afghanistan, Ukraine, Iran, and North Korea' [2]. In

effect, this allegedly 'secret' document was the extended report of the Russian International Affairs Council.¹ The roadmap did address the prospects of the Russian-US strategic partnership across a number of areas. However, it never claimed the status of a national programme or strategy, being a mere analytical report. The commitment of the parties to stronger bilateral relations provoked a reaction even from official Beijing. Chinese think-tanks and state media were concerned that 'the scales could be tipping away from Beijing's favour and in a direction that could further challenge China's regional and global ambitions' [3].

Despite the euphoria that swept the media waiting for changes in the US policy under the 45th President of the US, Donald Trump, experts argued that the US would still strive for world leadership and continue geopolitical confrontation with Russia. Some expected that the tension would extend to nuclear armaments as far as to provoke nuclear warfare [4].

In 2018, the stance of the US towards political dialogue with Russia remained equivocal. The influence of the American political establishment on Donald Trump's position was not always compensated by the ambition of the president to secure the economic benefit of his country in any dealings with its allies. For example, at the 2018 G7 summit held in Quebec, Trump said: 'NATO is as bad as NAFTA.² It's much too costly for the US'. Later, the President's Press Secretary softened this statement, emphasising that Trump was merely calling for NATO allies to 'shoulder their fair share of [...] common defense burden' [5].

It is very unlikely the US will abandon its leading role in NATO in a short-term perspective. However, some decisions of the current administration (withdrawal from UNESCO, relocation of the US embassy to Jerusalem, and suspension of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty) lead one to expect other extraordinary political initiatives. All this is of special concern to the country's allies in the Baltic, which, over the past 15 years, have built their military and political doctrines on confrontation with Russia.

The countries of the Baltic region on their way to NATO

The international processes taking place today clearly testify to the global balance of power shifting towards developing states, as well as to the emergence of new centres of power. Thus, the Russian

¹ *A Roadmap for U.S. – Russia Relations*, 2017, Moscow, Russian International Affairs Council; Center For Strategic And International Studies, available at: <http://russiancouncil.ru/papers/Russia-USA-Roadmap-Report30-En.pdf> (accessed 07.04.2018).

² Author's note: North American Free Trade Agreement.

expert community has to focus on describing an optimum form of Russia – US relations. To attain this, it is important to analyse the history of Russia-NATO relations and Russia's military security objectives in the North-West. The Strategy for the National Security of the Russian Federation stresses that, amid growing international instability, countries of the world are increasingly assuming responsibility for situations in their regions. Regional and subregional trade and other economic agreements are becoming an important mechanism to prevent crises.³ The Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation substantiates these assumptions. The document emphasises Russia's commitment to international security and stability at strategic and regional levels.⁴

The eastward expansion of NATO, which took place in the early 1990s–late 2000s, became an essential part of international political dialogue. It was often discussed in the context of the situation in the Kaliningrad region of Russia – a territory that both plays an important role in promoting Russian interests in the Baltic and has a significant effect on European security in general. This is not surprising: the geopolitical interests of Germany, Poland, Lithuania, and some other European countries overlap in the Baltic region. According to Vladislav Vorotnikov, 'NATO membership was a top priority of the Euro-Atlantic integration of the Baltics. On the one hand, it met the demands for security of both political elites and the victimised public consciousness. On the other hand, it allowed elites to present their countries in the international arena as outposts against Russia and borderlands between the West and the East' [6, p. 10].

Russian officials and defence experts have often stressed that the alliance and its enlargement pose a military threat to the Russian Federation [see, for example, 7, p. 98]. Galina Gribanova and Yuri Kosov write: '[in the 1990s], the NATO strategy did not focus on the Baltic Sea region as a priority area of potential military conflicts. The Baltic Sea region used to appear on the agenda only when some incidents occurred' [8, p. 58].

This problem has been addressed by Russian specialists in Baltic studies – Nikolai Mezhevich, Gennady Fedorov, and Yuri Zverev. They stress that the situation changed in the late 2000s. As a result,

³ Decree of the President of the Russian Federation of December 31, 2015, No 683 'On the Foreign Policy Strategy of the Russian Federation', 2015, *Rossiyskaya gazeta*. available at: <https://rg.ru/2015/12/31/nac-bezopasnost-site-dok.html> (accessed 07.04.2018) (in Russ.).

⁴ Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin on November 30, 2016), 2016, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (official website)*, available at: http://www.mid.ru/foreign_policy/news/-/asset_publisher/cKNonkJE02Bw/content/id/2542248 (accessed 07.04.2018) (in Russ.).



'the region, which was considered for twenty years an area of relative stability and rapid socioeconomic development, is evolving within the model of hybrid conflict, drifting towards military confrontation' [9, p. 4]. Another Russian international relations expert, Konstantin Khudoley, concludes his analysis of the evolution of the Baltic from the 1990s by emphasising that '[d]espite the 'turn to the East' that took place during the confrontation with the West, the Euro-Atlantic line of Russian foreign policy will remain a priority' [10, p. 14]. The international law component of the Russia–NATO relations has been addressed by Igor Kuznetsov [11] and Aleksandr Nikitin [12], who view NATO eastern initiatives as a long-term strategy for the deep integration of Central and Eastern Europe into the alliance.

Some international researchers examine these processes within a broader context of geopolitical changes and stress the ambitions of Russia and the US to secure military and political leadership [13]. For example, Kimberly Marten writes: 'NATO's expanding role in the Balkans and both NATO and US use of airstrikes without Russian consultation and approval probably mattered more than NATO's geographic expansion in status considerations' [14, p. 160].

The enlargement contributed to both the combat capability of the alliance and spurred its military activity. In 2002, NATO held a major exercise at Russian borders. First after the collapse of the USSR, it involved pre-emptive nuclear strike practice [15]. The military infrastructure of NATO was developing. In Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic, it was expanding eastward. Even civil aerodromes were to be repurposed. Overall, NATO was planning to engage 120 airfields as forward deployment bases. Aerodromes in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia gave the NATO aviation an opportunity to reach Russian objects east of the Volga.

Discussions held at the Russia-NATO Council meetings, which was established at the summit in Rome on May 28, 2002,⁵ did not ease Russia's concerns about the possible deployment of NATO troops and armaments in Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. This scenario was viewed as likely by some Russian politicians, since the US was planning to redeploy part of its European troops from 'old' alliance members (Germany) to Eastern European candidates. The pessimism of the Russian military was fuelled by the Baltics being very unlikely to join the adapted CFE Treaty.⁶

The problem was that the Baltics could have joined the treaty only after it had come into effect, which required its ratification by the sig-

⁵ *Russia-NATO Council* [official website], 2018, available at: <https://www.nato.int/nrc-website/ru/about/index.html> (accessed 07.04.2018) (in Russ.).

⁶ Author's note: the adopted CFE Treaty was concluded at the OSCE summit held in Istanbul on the initiative of Russia in 1999.



natories to the CFE. Russia made an official proposal to the Baltics that the four countries should assume mutual responsibility for 'containing' their armed forces and preventing a disproportional increase in their combat potentials. This proposal was not accepted [16].



Fig. 1. CFE territory in 2003 [17]

The prospects of European security were widely discussed at the time. Against this background, a conference entitled *North European Regional Integration: Challenges and Prospective Agenda* was held in Moscow on May 31, 2003. The event focused on international relations in the Baltic Sea region, world politics, changes in the policies of Russia, the US, the Nordic countries, and the Baltics, the eastward enlargement of NATO and Russia's reaction to it, and the entering into force of the adapted CFE Treaty. Most speakers paid attention to soft security in the Baltic region and possible international collaborations in solving environmental, economic, social, and other problems.⁷

The conference was a landmark. As its speakers emphasised, the international political situation had been sufficiently transformed by the time to expedite positive changes in the Baltic region. Enough time had passed from the disintegration of the USSR for the views of the Russian expert community and political leadership to change. The attitudes of national elites towards NATO enlargement became much less negative. The Northern European region was expected to play the key role in Russia's integration in Europe. Thus, the country demonstrated

⁷ North European Regional Integration: Challenges and Prospective Agenda, 2018, *Research and Academic Forum on International Relations website*, available from: <http://www.obraforum.ru/pdf/k2003program.pdf> (accessed 24.12.2018) (in Russ.).

that its north-western foreign policy was aimed at ensuring stability in the region and creating more comfortable conditions for all the actors. Many speakers stressed that the favourable backdrop had been created by the waning of the Baltics' concerns about the possible military pressure from Russia. This was partly a result of the three countries' impending accession to NATO and the EU.

On March 29, 2004, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia joined NATO. This stirred up reaction from some members of the Russian military and political leadership: the eastward enlargement of NATO was not in line with the country's interests. The expansion was perceived as distorting the post-war power balance in Europe. With the Baltics in mind, the then Russian Minister of Defence, Sergey Ivanov, 'demanded that NATO abandon its "anti-Russian stance" and prevent its members from anti-Moscow statements' [18]. Moreover, the location of NATO military bases at Russian borders both was against good neighbourly spirit and created tension in international relations, which persists to this day.

After the accession of Poland (1999) and Lithuania (2004) to NATO, the Kaliningrad region became even more vulnerable to external threats. Russia became a potential target of blackmail by neighbouring states, which could block maritime, air, and land connections to the region. The NATO rhetoric transformed the projected construction of a Grodno–Kaliningrad transport corridor, which was actively discussed in 1995–1999, into the so-called 'Suwałki gap'. Today, the defence of this gap is a key priority of the alliance [9, p. 12].

Since Peter the Great, Russia has viewed the Baltic Sea instrumental in forging partnerships with European states. Russian ports in the shallow-water narrow end of the Gulf of Finland, which freezes in the winter, can be easily blocked. Thus, it is easy to understand why Russia is increasing its naval presence in the southern, ice-free part of the Baltic Sea. Obviously, with its forces in the Kaliningrad region, Russia both ensures the security of the region and has the opportunity to influence European security in general. Some European researchers believe that further militarisation of the Baltic and the Kaliningrad region will lead to greater tension in the Russia–EU–NATO relations [19].

Unfortunately, expectations held by some experts that the problems of military security would play a smaller role in the intergovernmental relations in the Baltic Sea region have not been fulfilled. Ivan Timofeev writes: 'The Baltic of today is a most intricate area for Russia-NATO interaction. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland, all of them members of the alliance, serve as its frontier zone in direct contact with its Eastern neighbour'. He stresses: 'After the Ukraine crisis, the Baltic turned into a most vulnerable point for escalation' [20].

Similar conclusions have been drawn by Nikolai Mezhevich and Yuri Zverev. They consider a local military conflict as a possible scenario for the Baltic [9, p. 21]. Apparently, in the early 2000s, Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland were interested in a constructive Russia – NATO dialogue. Primarily, this applied to political forces that did not have value and ideational differences with Russia. The ‘permanent conflict’ principle was sometimes overridden by trade-driven pragmatic relations. For example, since May 1, 2004,⁸ Poland has been very active in implementing the eastern foreign policy strategy of the EU. The country has sought to strengthen its position as a major actor in the Russia – EU – NATO relations. This gave Poland an additional advantage in the dialogue with the EU leaders, especially, Germany, and translated in the economic benefits generated by the proximity to the Kaliningrad region.

The Baltic region amid military escalation and political confrontation

As early as 2012, Russian experts wrote that the accession of the Baltics to NATO did not have a dramatic effect on the post-war balance of power: ‘NATO’s military involvement in the Baltic States has so far failed to create an armed force capable of damaging Russia’s defences’ [21].

However, today the military and political situation in the Baltic region has evidently reached a new bout of tensions reminiscent of the mid-2000s. There are reasons to believe that this tendency will persist and new risks associated with military security will emerge. The latter may turn into military dangers and threats to national security. Below, we will discuss the facts supporting these beliefs.

Since 2012, the numbers of NATO contingents stationed at the western borders of Russia have increased threefold. Today, these forces are ready to deploy within 30 days, compared to the earlier notice period of 45 days. The US missile defence system in Europe has been brought to the level of initial operational readiness. The intensity of NATO aerial reconnaissance actions at Russian borders has increased 3.5-fold and marine reconnaissance 1.5-fold. The frequency of NATO military exercise at Russian borders has doubled. The alliance carried out 282 exercises in 2014 and as many as 548 in 2017. Each year, over 30 military exercises are conducted at Russia’s western borders. Their scenarios are based on armed confrontation with the country.⁹ The Minister of Defence of Russia, Sergey Shoigu, commented on the outcomes of the 2018 NATO summit in Brussels:

⁸ Author’s note: the date of Poland’s accession to the EU.

⁹ Expanded meeting of the Defence Ministry Board, 2018, *President of Russia*, Official website, available at: <http://kremlin.ru/events/president/news/56472> (accessed 04.01.2018) (in Russ.).



'Over 100 exercises have been held since the beginning of the year, with up to 80 thousand personnel involved. The numbers of personnel participating annually in military exercises has increased tenfold over the past five years and the number of combat aircraft employed from 11 to 101'. The Russian side was also concerned with the involvement of Finland and Sweden in NATO structures [22].

Russian side could not ignore these developments. On April 1, 2016, the 11th Army Corps was formed in the Kaliningrad region as part of the Baltic Fleet.¹⁰ In February, 2018, one of the brigades of the corps was equipped with Iskander-M ballistic missiles. This was confirmed by the Head of the State Duma Defence Committee, Vladimir Shamanov. He said: 'The constantly expanding military infrastructure of foreign states near Russian national borders will become the first target for Russia'.¹¹

This statement provoked a reaction from the NATO leadership and the Baltic States. They insisted that the Russian side was intentionally disturbing the balance. Galina Gribanova and Yuri Kosov write that most of the concerns of the Baltics and the alliance were caused by the fact that '[Iskander-M] missiles can carry nuclear or conventional warheads and have a range of 250 miles, placing Riga, Vilnius, and Warsaw within their reach' [8, p. 61]. At the same time, the position of NATO on increasing the defence capabilities of non-member states is obviously selective: what is permitted to some states is not permitted to others.

A vivid example is the decision made at the NATO summit in Warsaw on July 8, 2016, to station four battalions in the Baltics and Poland. According to the Secretary General of NATO, Jens Stoltenberg, this was 'proportionate measured defensive response' to Russia's actions [23]. The summit also agreed to create a joint intelligence and security division. Alongside its principal tasks of collecting and analysing information, this new structure was to ensure the effective use of the data submitted by the alliance allies [24].

Another source of possible threats to Russia is the NATO decision to bring the Baltic region states to a new level of military preparedness by granting Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia the status of leading nations within NATO. Thus, to maintain defence capability in the northwest, Russia has to estimate the situation in real time and take informed military and political decisions, which, among other things, will require additional government spending.

¹⁰ Coastal defence troops of Russian Navy to be transformed into army corps, 2018, *Flot. Com (analytical portal)*, available at: <https://flot.com/2017/%D0%92%D0%BC%D1%8415/> (accessed 04.01.2018) (in Russ.).

¹¹ Deputy Shamanov: Russia deployed Iskander ballistic missiles permanently, 2018, *Vesti.ru*, available at: <https://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=2984428> (accessed 04.01.2018) (in Russ.).

Intensive combat training of the military personnel of the Baltic NATO and the rotational deployment of aerial border patrol forces affected air safety in the region. In 2016, this problem merited the special attention of the international political leaders, including the President of Russia, Vladimir Putin. On his order, the country's Ministry of Defence drafted proposals for increasing flight safety in the Baltic region. They were presented at a meeting of the Russia–NATO Council on July 13, 2016. Following the meeting, Jens Stoltenberg said that NATO welcomed 'that Russia has signalled that it wants to pursue risk reduction measures'.¹² However, the head of Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sergey Lavrov, continues to emphasise that, despite the initiative from Russia, talks have not yet taken place.¹³

Stoltenberg stressed that NATO has to do everything possible to avoid misunderstandings and incidents involving Russia and that Russia could not and should not be isolated. He added that, despite the growing military activity of NATO in Europe and at Russian borders, the alliance leadership was interested in coordinating rules for interactions with Russia and avoiding any misunderstandings, incidents, or accidents. Nevertheless, as early as January 2017, dozens of US Special Operations forces arrived in Lithuania. The Director of the State Security Department of Lithuania, Darius Jauniškis, called the deployment of US troops a response to Russia's actions: 'NATO and other countries would not put up with Russia's aggression in the region'.¹⁴ Moreover, by the end of 2017, a network of advanced aerodromes ready to receive combat and support aircraft of the US and Western European air forces connected Zokniai in Lithuania, Lielvārde in Latvia, and Ämari in Estonia [25].

Earlier in 2017, the Minister of Defence of Poland, Antoni Macierewicz, said that his country required a stronger US military presence:

¹² Press conference by NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg following a meeting of the NATO-Russia Council, 2016, *NATO*, available from: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/opinions_134102.htm?selectedLocale=en (accessed 31.07.2016).

¹³ Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's statement and answers to media questions at a news conference following the talks with Finland's Foreign Minister Timo Soini, Haikon Kartano Manor, Porvoo, May 4, 2017, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs official website*, available at: http://www.mid.ru/press_service/minister_speeches/-/asset_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmR/content/id/2743998?p_p_id=101_INSTANCE_7OvQR5KJWVmR&_101_INSTANCE_7OvQR5KJWVmR_languageId=en_GB (accessed 12.06.2018) (In Russ.).

¹⁴ Lithuania confirms deployment of US special operators, 2017, *Delfi*, available at: <https://en.delfi.lt/lithuania/defence/lithuania-confirms-deployment-of-us-special-operators.d?id=73345104> (accessed 20.11.2017).

the deployment of at least two US divisions in Poland was necessary for the country to withstand external threats. The *Sejm* increased military spending to 2.5% of GDP. An increased defence budget is required to cope with the 'threat coming from the East'.¹⁵ A similar stance was adopted by the Baltics. The defence budget of Lithuania reached USD 747.74 million in 2017, which is almost twice the 2005 figure. The country is discussing the prospect of increasing military spending to 2.5% of GDP.¹⁶ The defence expenditure of Estonia and Latvia is also growing. Statistics show that the annual increment has reached 15% in recent years.

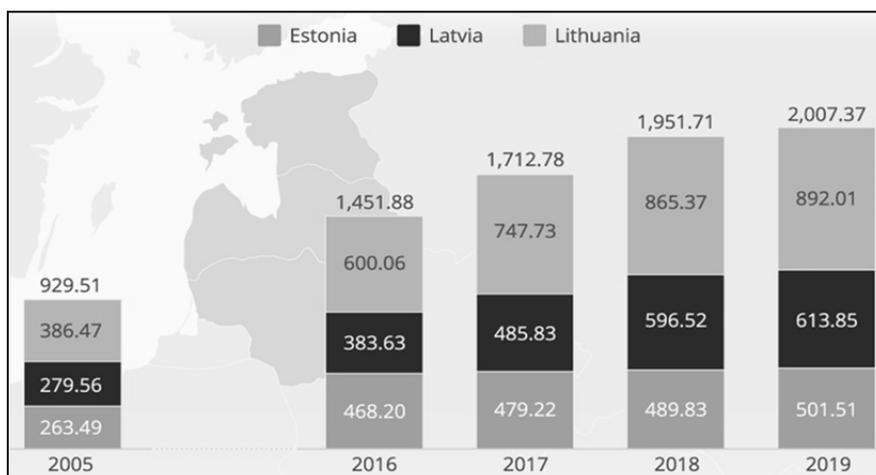


Fig. 2. Defence budgets of the Baltics in 2016 – 2019, USD million¹⁷

According to the official NATO report, the defence budgets of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Poland reached the US administration requirement of 2% of GDP. This will obviously translate into greater numbers of the member states' troops.¹⁸ One might even expect the

¹⁵ Poland believes deployment of at least two US divisions necessary for its defence, 2017, *Mail.ru*, available at: <https://news.mail.ru/politics/31181775/?frommail=1> (accessed 20.11.2017) (in Russ.).

¹⁶ Lithuanian security services officer: deals with Moscow are impossible, 2018, *EADaily*, available at: <https://easily.com/ru/news/2018/04/07/litovskiy-specsluzhbist-s-rossiey-nelzya-dogovoritsya> (accessed 07.04.2018) (in Russ.).

¹⁷ Defence budgets are surging in the Baltic States by Niall McCarthy, 2018, *The Statistics Portal*, available at: <https://www.statista.com/chart/6626/defence-budgets-are-surging-in-the-baltic-states/> (accessed 07.04.2018).

¹⁸ Defence Expenditure of NATO Countries (2011-2018), NATO, COMMUNIQUE PR/CP(2018)091 10 July, 2018, NATO, available at: https://www.nato.int/nato_static_fl2014/assets/pdf/pdf_2018_07/20180709_180710-pr2018-91-en.pdf (accessed 07.06.2018).



military spending targets to increase in the future. The stance adopted by the US will continue to shift the focus of the Baltics from national economic and social development to defence. Whereas, according to Mezhevich and Zverev: '[i]n the understanding of this circumstance, the expert and scientific community of Russia relies on the relatively recent Soviet experience' [26, p. 74].

A US missile defence base was deployed near the Polish village of Redzikowo 300 km away from Kaliningrad. It includes an Aegis Ashore missile defense system and an MK 41 vertical launch system equipped with Standard SM-3 Block IIA and Block IB missiles [27]. The military base was to be brought into full operation in 2018. However, according to Poland's Ministry of Defence, due to technical reasons, this will happen only in 2020 [28]. Some experts believe that the delay was rather caused by problems in the US–Polish bilateral relations and a lack of mutual trust.¹⁹ The editor-in-chief of the *Natsionalnaya oborona* (National Defence) journal, Igor Korotchenko, commented on the issue: 'The Polish government will not have access to the object'. He continues: 'No one will know with what missiles the Americans equip their systems. These may be either anti-ballistic missiles or attacking missiles of the Tomahawk type. This has nothing to do with the Polish village and concerns the US base only'.²⁰

Similar arguments have been put forward by Vadim Volovoy and Irina Batorshina. They maintain: 'The Baltic Republics and Poland have traditionally relied on the US rather than the EU for their security, viewing the latter as a tool to improve their economic well-being'. They stress that '[c]ountries that traditionally support confrontation with Russia, Poland and the Baltics, serve as a conduit for Washington strategy in Europe and a *cordon sanitaire*. This function is implemented through the Intermarium project meant to separate Russia from the EU' [29, p. 18].

At the same time, the Chief of the Cabinet of the President of Poland, Krzysztof Szczerski, said in an interview to the *Rzeczpospolita*: 'Our country will become the centre of the US military activities in the region, an operations base for the US troops'.²¹ Below, he explains: 'The idea of "Fort Trump", which the Polish President introduced to Donald Trump in Washington sought... to convince the

¹⁹ MSZ: baza w Redzikowie z opóźnieniem, 2018, *Defence24*, available at: <https://www.defence24.pl/msz-baza-w-redzikowie-z-opoznieniem> (accessed 07.04.2018).

²⁰ Iskander ballistic missiles to be deployed permanently in Kaliningrad region, 2018, *Vesti.ru*, available at: <https://www.vesti.ru/doc.html?id=2953621> (accessed 07.04.2018) (in Russ.).

²¹ '...nasz kraj stanie się centrum amerykańskiej aktywności wojskowej w regionie, swego rodzaju regionalną bazą operacyjną dla sił zbrojnych USA'.

Americans of the need to increase their presence in our country. It was a success. However, the US has a more ambitious idea: a stronger military presence in our country will provide not only national but also regional security on the stretch from Estonia to Bulgaria'.²² Today, 4.3 thousand US troops are stationed in Poland. This is the most numerous US contingent on the eastern flank and the fourth largest in Europe, following Germany (37.5 thousand people), Italy (12 thousand people), and the UK (8.3 thousand people).²³

Conclusion

The almost fifteen years of the Baltics' NATO membership demonstrate that threat of the eastward enlargement of the alliance was not exaggerated. Being a voluntary hostage to the bloc politics, the Baltic member states of NATO have to sacrifice regional security and development when tensions run high.

At the same time, Russian civilian and military officials should view the Baltics' NATO membership as an opportunity to promote dialogue with the alliance. A priority area of cooperation is navigation and air safety in the Baltic. Collaborations in this field will undoubtedly contribute to regional networking and mutual trust and improve the tenor of the Russia–NATO partnership. Another promising avenue is the resumption of collaborations within the BALTOPS military exercise. Since 1993, the Russian navy had taken part in the manoeuvres 19 times before the NATO leadership decided to exclude Russia from participation in 2014.

Paradoxical as it may seem, for Russia, minimisation of the negative consequences of the Baltics' accession to the alliance involves closer military cooperation at the Russia–NATO level. This may prevent the emergence of actual threats and contribute to the development of effective tools for regional cooperation.

An analysis of international relations in the Baltic region in the late 20th/early 21st centuries shows the following: active military cooperation makes the region safer for everyone. When the interests of regional partnerships are replaced by global political consideration, the military sector heightens the tensions. Politicians and military of-

²² 'Idea Fortu Trump, jaką polski prezydent przedstawił Donaldowi Trumpowi w Waszyngtonie, miała niejako... przekonać Amerykanów do samej idei zwiększenia zaangażowania w naszym kraju. I to się udało. Ale Ameryka ma jeszcze bardziej ambitną koncepcję. Chce, aby wzmocnienie sił w Polsce zapewniało bezpieczeństwo nie tylko naszemu krajowi, ale całemu regionowi, od Estonii po Bułgarię.'

²³Bielecki, J. 2019, Polska baza USA na flance wschodniej. *Rzeczpospolita*, available at: <https://www.rp.pl/Polityka/301109904-Polska-baza-USA-na-flance-wschodniej.html> (accessed 11.01.2019).

officials should keep this trend in mind. The 'keep the open door' principle suggests that '[s]tability and predictability are more likely to be assured if the United States and Russia resume a structured, sustained dialogue about deterrence, security, and strategic stability more broadly. The priority should be given to discussing measures that NATO and Russia could take to reduce the risk of conflicts arising from an incident or miscommunication' [30, p. 15]. Obviously, this principle remains relevant to this day.

In a short-term and mid-term perspective, the conduct of Russia's partners in the Baltic region will be strongly affected by the interests of the US, which the country promotes using the tools of global politics. In the context of the Kaliningrad problem, the military factor will prevail over soft security, since the latter is beyond the scope of the national interests of the US. Thus, the transatlantic voyage of Abramoses and Bradleys to the Baltic coast and the borders of the Russian Federation seems to be part of the US military strategy rather than an isolated event [31]. The scenario when the EU member states establish an independent European defence union that will forge equal partnerships with Russia and NATO and enter into collaborations with a focus on Baltic security, is not plausible [32, p. 7].

In taking preventive and response measures to ensure military security, Russia should claim leadership in solving the problems of soft security and development in the Baltic region. In other words, in the Baltic, Russia has to become an alternative to the US for those seeking long-term development based on the principle of equal partnership. To this end, it is important to engage all the possible tools of international and interregional cooperation. Here, the Kaliningrad exclave has to play an important role. The achievement of this goal may be expedited by a federal policy furthering the economic development of the region by granting tax exemptions to international companies working in the region, by introducing electronic visas, and by promoting cross-border cooperation.

Overall, history shows that hegemony does not work in the region. A more promising avenue is suggested by the thesis dating back to the late 1950s: 'the Baltic Sea – a Sea of Peace' [33]. In today's situation, which gives little ground for optimism, this thesis can be interpreted as 'better a bad peace than a good quarrel'.

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SOCIETY



INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN RUSSIA AND THE BALTIC COUNTRIES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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In this study, we examine the current state and prospects of inclusive education for learners with special needs and disabilities in the countries of the Baltic region (Poland, Sweden, Germany, Denmark, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Norway, and Russia). We present a SWOT analysis of the development of inclusive education in different countries and analyse its strengths and weaknesses, risks, threats, and challenges from a political, economic, and technological perspective. In our analysis, we dissociate the issue of inclusive education from the problem of teaching learners with disabilities and examine the political, economic, social, and technological aspects of the environment that affect the educational situation of learners with disabilities. We consider inclusive education in the context of the documents of the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education – an active educational institution that facilitates the preparation and adaptation of all learners to life in complex multicultural and integrated societies through rights, freedom, tolerance, and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities. Our analysis of inclusive education trends relies on the assessment of the goals and objectives, accessibility, and socio-cultural and economic feasibility of inclusive educational systems. We stress political, socio-cultural, and technological differences in practices, dynamics, and prospects for inclusive education in the Baltic region countries and Russia.

Keywords: inclusive education, special education, special educational needs, compassion-based approach (charity), isolation-based approach (segregation), socio-cultural efficiency-based approach (inclusion and integration)

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Introduction

Socio-cultural evolution, scientific and technological progress in the XX century led to a change in the demographic composition of the population. One of the consequences was an increase in the number of children with disabilities worldwide. According to the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, between 1.11 % and 17.47 % of school-age learners with disabilities were registered in thirty countries in 2017. For example, in the Baltic countries: more than 3 % in Poland, 5 % in Germany and Denmark, 6 % in Latvia, 8 % in Estonia and Norway, about 12 % in Lithuania. The average for the European countries is 4.53 %¹.

Russia is no exception: today the status of a child with disabilities (CWD), or children with special needs (CSN), or special education needs (SEN), has more than 651,000 children (2.4 %)².

The life and fate of these children almost two hundred years ago ceased to be exclusive precedents and set the states and societies before the need to solve the problems of socialization, adaptation to the social and economic conditions of life of persons with disabilities. One of the main mechanisms for solving the problems posed is the education system.

Several divergent attitudes have been historically manifested posing political, economic, sociocultural and technological aspects with regard to the issue [1]. Each of the opposing attitudes and positions has strengths and weaknesses, creates opportunities and reveals perspectives for the disabled. Each of them conceals threats and risks for subjects of education with special needs and society as a whole.

The purpose of this study is to analyze antagonistic viewpoints in terms of assessing the state and attractiveness of special and inclusive education for different education stakeholders by identifying the strengths and advantages of each of the educational attitudes for learners with disabilities, as well as a description of the possible negative consequences associated with them in the context of the overall situation in the educational sector in Russia and the Baltic region countries. The results of this analysis can serve as a reason for reflection not only for scholars who evaluate the structure and functioning of public institutions but also for politicians and economists who make strategic decisions in the field of education.

Methods of research

To assess the state and attractiveness of different education systems for learners with special needs and disabilities, we have chosen and adapted the SWOT-analysis method. The choice stems from the fact that this fairly

¹ Inclusive education for learners with disabilities. Petitions. European Agency, 2017. Policy Department C: Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/supporting-analyses> (accessed 12.05.2018).

² *Uroven' invalidizatsii v Rossiyskoy Federatsii. GIS Federal'noy sluzhby gosudarstvennoy statistiki* [The level of disability in the Russian Federation. In: State Information System of the Federal State Statistics Service], available at: http://www.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_main/rosstat/en/statistics/population/disabilities (accessed 13.04.2018) (In Russ.).

universal flexible method with a free selection of the analyzed elements, used in the strategic management of various spheres of public life, allows us to give a structured description of the situation regarding which decisions need to be made. In this case, the object of the SWOT-analysis comprises different positions with regard to the education of CWDs. A SWOT analysis is known as an effective method for an overall assessment of the current situation in the context of the strengths and weaknesses of individual positions and attitudes, as well as the threats and risks associated with them, although it cannot replace the development of a strategy. Therefore, this study does not assess individual phenomena of the situation of CWDs and CSNs in schools in Russia, as well as the development of specific measures to strengthen the weaknesses and eliminate the threats.

In an effort to more clearly present the context for the development of education for CWDs and CSN, we adapted the PEST analysis to identify political (Political), economic (Economic), social (Social) and technological (Technological) aspects of the external environment that affect the situation in the educational sector for learners with disabilities. The political and economic aspects are outlined because they influence the acquisition of key resources for the education of learners with disabilities at the state level. However, in our opinion, the core of different positions and attitudes in relation to the education of learners with disabilities is consumer preferences, i. e. attractiveness for education stakeholders. They are represented with the social component of the PEST analysis. An equally important factor is the technology component, which reveals the trends in technological support for the development of education for learners with disabilities and their connection with unattractiveness. This component also indicates the prospects for the introduction of new education formats.

The use of these methods allowed us to distinguish several generalized categories of the analysis as attitudes. The attitude, in this case, refers to the orientation of the state, society (in general, and the subjects of education in particular), which is reflected in the attitude towards the education of learners with disabilities. Due to the many-sided and multidimensional attitudes regarding the education of learners with disabilities, we conditionally referred to such approaches as compassion-based attitude (charity), isolation-based attitude (segregation), and socio-cultural efficiency-based attitude (inclusion and integration). The introduction of these generalized concepts is due to the need to analyze the merits, weaknesses and risks, as well as the prospects for special (remedial) and inclusive education in a particular socio-political, economic and cultural context.

A compassion-based attitude in the Baltic region countries and Russia regarding learners with special needs and disabilities: strengths and weaknesses

Compassion in education historically arose earlier than the rest (in the XVIII-XIX centuries) as a reflection of the principle of altruism in the public consciousness in its utilitarian sense. It was aimed at providing compassionate treatment for the education of CSN, regardless of their limitations in health and development. Education was focused on teaching basic skills for better employment opportunities and social adaptation in society.



The declaration of good intentions from the socio-cultural point of view seemed to be rather attractive, but the political, economic and technological aspects of charitable education were clearly weak. The schemes of the state and society did not include ensuring equal rights and opportunities for this category of people. Charity and state funding provided only minimal educational inquiries. The problems of obtaining a quality education and assistance in the development of abilities, social autonomy and citizenship were not on the agenda and remained unresolved. Pedagogical approaches and educational technologies remained the lot of single-player enthusiasts and were not widely used.

With undoubted progress, compared to the previous century, with regard to the state and society to people with disabilities and CSN, such a position latently resulted in discrimination of rights and restriction of access to education and career of people with special needs, often deprived them of opportunities to become full citizens. Moreover, attitudes towards children with developmental disabilities in some (even civilized) countries have acquired cruel and violent forms [2, p. 154].

Modern adherents of compassion attitudes, as a rule, often organize themselves in the form of social movements, get support and financing from charities, individuals, or public grants for implementing educational projects with the participation of learners with disabilities. The most significant expenditures for such items are envisaged in the budgets of Sweden, Denmark and Norway, being countries with a higher quality of life. Educational projects and support for teachers in both primary and secondary education in Sweden regarding inclusion have been substantial for many years and these actions have been carried out in cooperation with organizations with a specialization in teaching and learning about special needs, such as for instance, The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools in Sweden (*Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten*)³.

In Russia, half of all households with persons with disabilities have a high incidence of poverty and can afford only food and clothing⁴. Low financial status significantly limits the ability to support learners with SEN and leaves CWDs without access to higher education, and sometimes even to secondary vocational education.

Another weakness of compassion attitude in the education system nowadays is that the increasing financial support for children and adults with disabilities in terms of state pensions and benefits in these respective countries does not contribute to their desire to obtain professional

³ *Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten* [The National Agency for Special Needs Education and Schools in Sweden], available at: www.spsm.se (accessed 23.06.2018) (In Swed. and Engl.).

⁴ *Kompleksnoye nablyudeniye usloviy zhizni naseleniya v 2014 godu, v protsen-takh*. GIS Federal'nyy reyestr invalidov [Comprehensive Observation of Living Conditions of Population in 2014, as a percentage. In: State Information System of the Federal State Statistics Service, The Federal Register of Disabled People], available at: http://www.gks.ru/free_doc/new_site/population/invalid/tab3-8.htm (accessed 20.04.2018) (In Russ.).

education and economic independence. In Russia, only 25 % of disabled people of working age are employed, and only half of them are involved in local communities and are willing to lead an independent way of life⁵.

At the risk of causing criticism, we will state the thesis that the attitude of compassion is legitimate and constructive for a very narrow category of CWDs in the first and second categories who have significant intellectual difficulties and are not capable of mastering the basic curriculum. As for the rest of learners with disabilities, the dynamics of development of higher mental functions (attention, memory, thinking, imagination, speech) in many CWDs may differ from the average statistical rate. For example, due to visual and hearing impairments, central nervous system or behavioural disorders, they may require more time and the application of special interdisciplinary methods for stimulating the development of speech and thinking.

But creating conditions for meeting special educational needs allows most CWDs and learners with SEN to complete their education, and get a profession and a social status. That is what, in fact, the whole history of defectology proves [3–5].

Compassion for many learners with disabilities creates low aspirations, acquired helplessness and consumerist behaviour patterns. It also does not actualize the need to use such upward mobility as vocational education. This is a vicious cycle of poverty when poor families cannot provide their CWDs with vocational education. They live on the dole, rely on public assistance and have no lifestyle choices.

Special education: the contradiction between technological adaptability and socio-cultural and economic efficiency

An increase in public awareness, a greater understanding of weaknesses of education endowments and attempts to solve these problems at the state level have led to the transformation of compassion attitude into institutional support of the education of learners with disabilities⁶ in the form of a special (remedial) education system. The emergence of special

⁵ *Trud i zanyatost' invalidov. Samostoyatel'nyy obraz zhizni i vo vlechennost' v mestnoye soobshchestvo. GIS Federal'noy sluzhby gosudarstvennoy statistiki* [Labor and employment of disabled people. Independent way of life and involvement in the local community In: State Information System of the Federal State Statistics Service], available at: http://www.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_main/rosstat/ru/statistics/population/disabilities (accessed 20.04.2018) (In Russ.).

⁶ *Federal'nyy zakon Rossiyskoy Federatsii "Ob obrazovanii v Rossiyskoy Federatsii"*, No. 273-FZ (v red. Federal'nykh zakonov ot 07.05.2013, No. 99-FZ, ot 23.07.2013 N 203-FZ) [Federal Law of the Russian Federation "On Education in the Russian Federation", No. 273-FZ (amended by Federal Law, No. 99-FZ of 07.05.2013, No. 203-FZ of July 23, 2013)], available at: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_140174/ (accessed 01.05.2018).



education is attributed to the 1760s and 1780s, and the genuine recognition and development were received in the XX century⁷ [6; 7].

Paradoxically, the desire for unification of universal primary and then secondary education has stipulated the need for differentiation. Technological support of educational programs and methods requires correction of imbalances in terms of levels and characteristics of intelligence, sensory systems, physical and psychological status of learners in general. The complexity of the programs required significant financial costs for teacher training, the design of specialized facilities and equipment, the detention and treatment of children at all specialized custodial institutions, specialized and boarding schools and in closed settings⁸. This specificity has led to the isolation of special (remedial) education into a separate niche.

The attitude of isolation in the education of learners with disabilities is highly relevant; and in Russia, there are many adepts of it among teachers and parents. They advocate the system of teaching CSN in specialized narrowly focused institutions, especially for learners with visual and hearing impairments, locomotory system disorders, developmental delays, etc., on the basis of differentiating learners with disabilities by the type of special needs and separating them from other learners. Such institutions quite successfully compensate for health restrictions and disorders in the process of training with the help of highly qualified specialists and special educational technologies.

The benefit of isolation attitude is the support of special education services for parents of CSN. Many of them, due to their low financial and economic status, find it very difficult to leave work to attend to their child. The educational institution in this situation fulfils not only an educational function but also a function of social support, allowing parents to work and participate in social life.

Another strength of isolation attitude in special education is the progress in the intellectual development of learners with disabilities through adaptive programs. However, a comparison of the level and quality of

⁷ *Federal'nyy zakon ot 24 noyabrya 1995 g., No. 181-FZ "O sotsial'noy zashchite invalidov v Rossiyskoy Federatsii"* [Federal Law of November 24, 1995, No. 181-FZ "On the social protection of disabled people in the Russian Federation"], available at: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_8559/ (accessed 01.05.2018).

⁸ *Trebovaniya k organizatsii obrazovatel'nogo protsessa dlya obucheniya invalidov i lits s ogranichennymi vozmozhnostyami zdorov'ya v professional'nykh obrazovatel'nykh organizatsiyakh, v tom chisle osnashchennosti obrazovatel'nogo protsessa. Pis'mo Departamenta podgotovki rabochikh kadrov i DPO Ministerstva obrazovaniya i nauki Rossiyskoy Federatsii 18 marta 2014 g. N 06-281* [Requirements for the organization of the educational process for the education of disabled people and persons with disabilities in professional educational organizations, including the provision of an educational process. Letter of the Department for the Training of Personnel and Additional Vocational Education of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, March 18, 2014, No. 06-281], available at: http://www.mubint.ru/disabl/normativnye_dokumenty/Pismo_Minobrnauki_Rossii_ot_18.03.2014_g_N_06-281.pdf (accessed 01.03.2018). (In Russ.).

competences of graduates of special and mass schools disproves this assertion. The majority of applicants with SEN who are eager to get a degree, with rare exceptions, have low Unified State Examination scores and enter the university on a preferential basis. The total number of learners with SEN in Russia who completed a course of vocational training in 2017 comprised less than 5000 people. It amounted to 8.5 % of young people between 18 and 30 years of age⁹. Statistics indicate a decline in the number of people receiving higher and secondary vocational education¹⁰.

The result is quite understandable. Special (remedial) education in Russia nowadays, in accordance with the one 30–50 years ago in the Baltic Countries, is based on a differentiated approach, taking into account the potential and capacities of learners. Special psychological and pedagogical conditions are created: facilitative modes of study and leisure activities, extended periods of training, a significant change in the content of curricula and training programs, a reduced degree of complexity in the delivery of educational material, with the particular emphasis on acquiring social and day-to-day skills, rather than mastering a complete training program.

According to the Federal State Educational Standards for special education in Russia, the fundamental purpose and the main result of education is the general cultural and personal development of the learner. "Personal results include mastering social (vital) competences, which are necessary for solving practice-oriented tasks to ensure conditioning social attitudes of learners, the motivation for learning and active insight"¹¹. The requirements for curriculum outcomes are differentiated depending on the degree of special needs. In relation to learners with various special needs and health risks, complex health disorders, the real possibility to achieve the maximum possible life skills and accessible academic success on an individual rehabilitation program is legislatively underpinned.

⁹ *Obrazovaniye invalidov. GIS Federal'noy sluzhby gosudarstvennoy statistiki* [Education of disabled people. In: State Information System of the Federal State Statistics Service, The Federal Register of Disabled People], available at: http://www.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_main/rosstat/ru/statistics/population/disabilities/# (accessed 30.04.2018) (In Russ.).

¹⁰ *Chislennost' invalidov, poluchivshikh vyssheye i sredneye professional'noye obrazovaniye na 01.01.2018. Federal'nyy reyestr invalidov* [Number of disabled people who received higher and secondary vocational education as of 01.01.2018. In: State Information System of the Federal State Statistics Service, The Federal Register of Disabled People], available at: <https://sfri.ru/stat> (accessed 30.04.2018) (In Russ.).

¹¹ *Prikaz ministerstva obrazovaniya i nauki RF №1599 ot 19.12.2014 "Ob utverzhdenii federal'nogo gosudarstvennogo obrazovatel'nogo standarta obrazovaniya obuchayushchikhsya s umstvennoy otstalost'yu (intellektual'nyimi narusheniyami)"* [Order of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation, No. 1599 of December 19, 2014, "On approval of the federal state educational standard of education for students with mental retardation (intellectual disabilities)], available at: <http://www.garant.ru/products/ipo/prime/doc/70760670/>, pp. 27-28 (accessed 30.04.2018) (In Russ.).



In other words, special education offers equal opportunities for CSN at the legislative level by providing specially organized educational services in a sufficiently separate system of educational institutions. In addition, isolation attitude plays the role of social support for families who have learners with disabilities. The issue of personal development, socialization and equal rights of CSN seems to be very controversial.

The advocates of remedial education ignore the fact that children are under conditions of their micro-society and overprotective teachers. They do not interact with their peers from regular classes and are often isolated from the family. This segregation leads to significant difficulties in communication in the public, in socio-economic adaptation and in career choices after leaving school. Graduates of specialized schools are socially infantile and require continuing guardianship and support.

Special difficulties are caused by vocational training and employment because the number of special educational institutions for vocational training is very limited. According to the Federal Register for the Disabled, employed people with disabilities of working age in Russia comprise 25.7 %¹². A number of jobs for people with disabilities who haven't undergone any vocational training are also limited.

In search of opportunities for solving this problem through the means of the education system, public organizations and volunteers from 46 countries, including Russia, have joined the unique international non-profit movement "Abilimpix". The movement is trying to provide relevant vocational guidance, to strengthen the motivation of learners with disabilities to obtain vocational training, to promote their employment and sociocultural inclusion in society. To create awareness and promote vocational training for learners with disabilities, the popularization of best practices and the development of professional standards for special education are used throughout the world. In the Russian Federation alone, there have been about a hundred regional and four National professional skills competitions among learners with disabilities¹³. Indeed, 94.7 % of those participating in the Abilimpix championship in 2017 are employed or continue to study¹⁴. In assessing the prospects, we draw attention to the master classes planned

¹² *Kolichestvo rabotayushchikh invalidov trudosposobnogo vozrasta. Statistika. Analitika. Federal'nyy reyestr invalidov* [Number of disabled workers of working age. Statistics. Analytics. In: State Information System of the Federal State Statistics Service, The Federal Register of Disabled People], available at: <https://sfri.ru/stat> (accessed 01.03.2018) (In Russ.).

¹³ *Natsional'nyy chempionat po professional'nomu masterstovu dlya lyudey s invalidnost'yu "Abilimpiks"* [National championship on professional skills for people with disabilities "Abilimpix"], available at: <https://abilympi cspro.ru/centers/national-center> (accessed 19.05.2018) (In Russ.).

¹⁴ *Federal'nyy reyestr invalidov. Mezhdunarodnoye nekommercheskoye dvizheniye "Abilimpiks", 06 oktyabrya 2017* [the Federal Register of Disabled Persons. International non-commercial movement "Abilimpix", October 6, 2017], available at: https://sfri.ru/news/_abilympics pro/~ 2017/10/06/21 (accessed 29.04.2018) (In Russ.).

within the framework of the IV Moscow Championship: competitions in professional competencies, master classes on baking, crocheting, needle knitting, carving, confectionery, macrame, massage, and aesthetic cosmetology¹⁵. Obviously, special education continuously attempts to perform an adaptive function, although its efficiency is not high enough.

Thus, the strong technological side of special education is at odds with weak socio-cultural opportunities and economic viability. There is also a political controversy: special education, on the one hand, ensures the right to education guaranteed by the constitution, since it compensates for health for the development of intelligence and cognitive skills. And on the other hand, it restricts the civil rights of learners with SEN, creates barriers for the socialization of special schools leavers, barriers for building a route for vocational training, career and autonomous life. The presence of these contradictions indicates the ineffectiveness of the isolated education attitude towards learners with disabilities [8, p.51 – 54; 9, p. 152 – 174].

Inclusive education: feasibility and the economic perspective

In the Baltic Countries almost 50 years ago, the choice was made in the direction of ensuring civil rights¹⁶. The isolated education attitude towards learners with disabilities has lost its appeal to the European ideologists of social development and is not widespread. For example, the ratio of learners with disabilities going to special schools in Sweden is only 1 %, in Denmark it is 2 %, in Estonia it is slightly more than 3 %, in Germany and Latvia – less than 4 %, and in Norway less than 1 %¹⁷. The utilitarian nature of special education has ceased to be a priority and given way to the functions of socializing learners with disabilities and integrating them into society as equal citizens.

Politicians, economists and sociologists 'promote' the model of education for learners with disabilities, which can be characterized as an attitude of socio-cultural expediency. Expediency seems to correlate the political, social and cultural goals of society with the ways of achieving them with the help of education as an upward mobility mechanism. At the present stage of social development, this attitude has been developed into the concept of inclusive education and integration of learners with disabilities into the system of pre-school, primary education, general secondary and higher education.

¹⁵ *Abilimpiks*, 2018 [Abilimpix, 2018], available at: http://abilympics.moscow/news/ID_56.html (accessed 19.05.2018) (In Russ.).

¹⁶ *Deklaratsiya o pravakh invalidov. Prinyata rezolyutsiyey 3447 (XXX) Generalnoy Assamblei ot 9 dekabrya 1975 goda* [The Declaration on the Rights of Disabled Persons (Resolution 3447 (XXX) of 9 Dec. 1975) proclaimed by UN General Assembly], available at: http://www.un.org/en/documents/decl_conv/declarations/disabled.shtml (accessed 30.04.2018) (In Russ.).

¹⁷ Inclusive education for learners with disabilities. Petitions. European Agency, 2017. Policy Department C: Citizens' Rights and Constitutional Affairs, available at: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/supporting-analy-ses> (accessed 12.05.2018).



As stated in the petition of the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education: "The ultimate vision of inclusive education systems is to ensure that all learners of any age are provided with meaningful quality educational opportunities in their local community with their friends and peers"¹⁸. The goal is to fundamentally convert the policy and technologies of education into the practices of teaching and support. Instead of isolating and grouping children according to the nature and extent of the disability, the education system must acquire the ability to respond to the diverse needs of learners without the need for their categorization, labelling and stigmatization. Leading-edge ideas and basic concepts of inclusive education advocated by G. Feuser, A. Sander, H. Reiser, U. Haeblerlin, O. Speck, S.V. Alekhina, T.A. Basilova, V.I. Lubovsky, T.V. Furlyaeva, each in their own way, are resorted not only to the content of education but rather to the social reality and social function of education, the need to form an inclusive educational culture [9, p. 152–174;10–14].

Thus, inclusive education in schools must compensate for different starting positions, rather than individual weaknesses of learners¹⁹. This principle is an absolute breakthrough in the education of learners with disabilities and SEN, as it brings society to a new socio-cultural level of development, and opens up further opportunities and prospects for the development of pedagogical innovations.

The humane worldview and the principles of equality on which inclusive education is based ensure the developmental goals that are declared in the constitutions of all civilized countries, the Declaration of Human Rights and other UN documents, and are considered to be the fundamental strength of the attitude of socio-economic expediency.

It should be understood that the socio-cultural expediency of inclusive education has become possible, thanks to the development of its technological components: new digital communication technologies, databases and the Internet. For example, modern technologies for presenting the content for learners with visual and hearing impairments, locomotory system disorders, as well as the required special facilities and equipment may well be mastered by teachers of the regular schools or by teachers of special classes integrated into mainstream educational institutions. In this connection, it is necessary to introduce modules and blocks of disciplines on inclusive education and education of learners with disabilities in the integrative training programs in higher education for specialists in the field of pedagogical and psychological studies [15; 16].

¹⁸ Inclusive education for learners with disabilities // European Parliament Committees. URL: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/committees/en/supporting-analyses-search.html> (дата обращения: 23.04.2018).

¹⁹ *Gosudarstvennaya programma Rossiyskoy Federatsii "Dostupnaya sreda" na 2011 – 2015 gody, utverzhdenная postanovleniyem Pravitel'stva Rossiyskoy Federatsii ot 17 marta 2011, No. 175* [The State Program of the Russian Federation "Accessible Environment" for 2011–2015, approved by the Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation, No. 175 of March 17, 2011], available at: <http://base.garant.ru/12184011/> (accessed 19.05.2018).

Socio-cultural efficiency has economic prospects. They consist of the possibility of reducing the level of psychological helplessness, expanding flexible career choices among learners with disabilities, and broadening the ability to be integrated into economic relations through the development of social networks of educational communities.

This begs the question, why did not the system of inclusive education, with all the socio-cultural and even economic expediency, develop until the 21st century? The fact is that it has a number of weaknesses. They were identified in the middle of the XIX century, when the first officially mentioned attempts of performing joint teaching of children with learning disabilities and their peers in regular classes were undertaken in France, Great Britain and Germany [17].

Despite the fact that the idea was supported by governments, advocates of integrating the hearing-impaired children into the lessons of the non-impaired children in the primary and secondary school faced severe resistance from teachers of special education and parents of learners. Teachers saw in it the incentive to find ways to economize on the education of learners with disabilities at the expense of quality and learning environment. In addition, regular schools lacked the necessary facilities and equipment, and teachers did not possess special educational technologies for teaching learners with disabilities.

Parents of learners with SEN in different countries were concerned that CWDs could not master a complete training program with their peers. It is also necessary to take into account the fact that learners with disabilities remained in the care of the family, which created additional financial and social difficulties.

Similar arguments are still used today by supporters of the special education system and opponents of the inclusion and integration of learners with disabilities. According to the research of A.-J. Resch, G. Mireles, M.-R. Benz, C. Grenvelge, R. Peterson, D. Zhang, nowadays the main reasons, which threaten the well-being and peace of the parents of learners with disabilities, are the information deficit, limited access to social services, the discrepancies between real incomes and necessary expenses, poor inclusion in the mainstream educational and social environment [18]. The same problems are seen by Russian parents of learners with disabilities [19].

Russia's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was approved by the general public. However, the attitude of educators and the public towards inclusive education has not changed much in the last hundred years. Trying to allay public concerns, the pedagogical community and parents, the Minister of Education O. V. Vasilieva was forced to officially assure that "... there will be the same number of remedial schools, as many as 1764 in the future, and their funding will continue... Simultaneously, more than 11,000 general secondary schools have taken learners for inclusive education. This is a very great achievement, there are 367,000 children"²⁰. In fact, the first steps towards inclusion are very modest, since the system of general secondary education in the

²⁰ *Roditel'skoye sobraniye vedet ministr* [The Parental Meeting is Held by the Minister], available at: <https://rg.ru/2017/08/30/glava-minobrnau-ki-provela-vserossijskoe-roditelskoe-sobranie.html> (accessed 30.04.2018) (In Russ.).



Russian Federation comprises more than 41,100 educational institutions. And inclusion coverage of less than 27 % is difficult to consider an achievement²¹.

The weak side of inclusive education in Russia is not only the limited dynamics of its prevalence. S. V. Alekhina, E. V. Kulagina, N. N. Malofeev and other Russian scientists who study the problems of inclusive education agree that, despite the epoch-making significance of the adopted governmental programs and plans, the obvious progress of inclusion, the gap between the real educational practice, goals and opportunities remain quite significant [20; 21 – 23].

Research conducted at the Immanuel Kant Baltic Federal University (Kaliningrad) in 2012 – 2016 revealed an insufficient level of psychological and professional readiness of teachers for learners with disabilities. And the inadequacy is inherent in all the components of commitment and willingness to work in an inclusive educational environment: they all lack cognitive, emotional-evaluative, motivational, reflexive and communicative abilities. It affects the nature of communication and interaction with all the participants in the inclusive educational space [24].

The institution of tutoring for the socio-psychological and pedagogical support of inclusion is not yet functioning. In Russia the professional standard for specialists in the area of upbringing and education²², which regulates the tutor's work on the development and selection of methodological tools for conditioning open, variable, adapted educational environment for learners with disabilities, was approved by the government in January 2017. With its introduction, professional inclusive educational environment has emerged to start its further establishment²³.

In the EU, according to a study organized by DLA Piper in 2017 and conducted at the request of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the weakest side of inclusive education is its legal provision and protection. Threats and obstacles for inclusion are

²¹ *Obrazovaniye v 2017 godu (po dannym Ministerstva obrazovaniya i nauki Rossiyskoy Federatsii na nachalo uchebnogo goda). Federal'naya sluzhba gosudarstvennoy statistiki* [Education in 2017 (according to the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation at the beginning of the school year). In: Federal State Statistics Service], available at: http://www.gks.ru/wps/wcm/connect/rosstat_main/rosstat/ru/statistics/population/education (accessed 12.10.2018) (In Russ.).

²² *Professional'nyy standart «Spetsialist v oblasti vospitaniya» (uto. prikazom Ministerstva truda i sotsial'noy zashchity RF ot 10 yanvarya 2017 g. № 10n)* [Professional standard: Specialist in the field of education (approved by order of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection of the Russian Federation. No. 10n of January 10, 2017)], available at: <http://www.garant.ru/pro ducts/ipo/prime/doc/71495630/#ixzz5FxnHzYfc> (accessed 19.05.2018) (In Russ.).

²³ *Obrazovaniye bez granits: informatsionno-metodicheskiy portal po inklyuzivnomu i spetsial'nomu obrazovaniyu* [Education without Borders: information and methodological portal on inclusive and special education], available at: <http://window.edu.ru/resource/946/77946> (accessed 19.05. 2018) (In Russ.).

grouped under four themes [25]: 1) lack of information on how to challenge the denial of violation of the right to education among persons with disabilities; 2) difficulties in obtaining legal aid in cases brought against schools or public administrations, including formal and informal procedural barriers for appeals on denial of inclusive education, etc. 3) individual legal protection necessary for children with disabilities and their parents or guardians from victimization and stigmatization in the process of upholding the right to inclusive education. This comprises "... threats of deprivation of parental rights by the school or state authorities; threats of humiliation by schools or state administrations; beliefs of parents or legal guardians of children with disabilities that it is unfair to give more attention to learners with disabilities in the classroom towards other school children; pressure by parents of other children on parents or legal guardians of a child with a disability against enrolling a child in school; applying medical-sounding labels to children with disabilities on the basis of medical disability models, etc."; 4) lack of independent, effective, accessible, understandable, safe and enforceable mechanisms for handling complaints and remedies with the Ombudsman's decisions being recommendatory and not legally binding and influential.

Conclusions

Inclusive and special education in Russia and in the Baltic region countries at the present stage consists of two separate subsystems of education. The first one is a developing open dynamic system that is evolving on the basis of resolving contradictions between good intentions and the actual state of this system, overcoming the imperfection of technological support, formalism, the resistance of some parents, and insufficient level of psychological and professional readiness of teachers to train and educate CSN. Functionally inclusive education is focused on the adaptation and training of all learners, and not only with SEN, to vital activities in complex multicultural and integrated societies based on ensuring the rights, freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination of persons with disabilities.

The second subsystem – special (remedial) education – is rather isolated due to the high degree of differentiation of the educational programs, and the need for high-tech psychological and pedagogical support. Prospects for its development are determined by the possibilities of using the achievements of scientific and technological progress in the field of high-tech equipment (prosthetics, implantation, etc.) and information technologies. Functionally, it is intended for a rather narrow enrolment of CSN and has a tendency to reduce the number of learners due to the difficulties of their socialization and professionalization after they have completed general secondary education.

Both subsystems are the result of historically established approaches regarding the education of people with disabilities: the attitudes of socio-cultural efficiency (inclusion and integration) of learners with SEN, the attitude of compassion (charity), the attitude of isolation (segregation).

Comparative analysis of strengths and weaknesses, perspectives and threats arising in the organization of education for learners with disabili-

ties in Russia and the Baltic Countries shows that at present the attitude of isolation is more attractive for the Russian population with remedial education of learners with disabilities in special institutions. Socially and culturally appropriate inclusive education is developing slowly because the political will of the government faces numerous difficulties in overcoming open resistance of parents, veiled resistance of the pedagogical community, and the imperfection of special technological support for mainstream schools.

In the Baltic Countries, a different situation has developed. Inclusive education is prioritized for all children in mainstream educational settings, and schools and curricula are ensured to be adaptable and accessible to all learners with disabilities. Latent resistance to inclusion is observed by educational institutions and local administrations. The current and general view in Sweden, for instance, is that isolated education of children is to be avoided in favour of inclusion and integration both at class- and school-level and is possible even though there are challenges with it. The attitude is that making the learning processes as effective as possible is the goal and the overall social situation for an individual child is also to be considered to be significant in the decision-making.

It should be understood that there will always be a certain percentage of CSN who are not capable of learning, or who are able to master only the simplest self-organization skills. Therefore, the attitude of charity and isolation will remain relevant in the educational system, and no expediency and economy should dominate in making political and economic decisions regarding the education of such learners.

Notwithstanding the above, the generalized spread of inclusive education is quite high. The cause for optimism is, first of all, humanistic tendencies and axiological orientations in the educational environment and, secondly, the progress of technological and communicative technologies that prevent the development of a number of barriers in the education and upbringing of learners with SEN.

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**TERRITORIAL STRUCTURE
OF THE DENOMINATIONAL
SPACE
OF THE SOUTH-EAST
BALTIC**

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The South-East Baltic is a meeting place of three branches of Christianity: Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Lutheranism. Dominant in the Baltic region, these religious confessions define the cultural landscape of the area. At the same time, they have an indirect effect on socio-economic development. In this study, we aim to identify the main components of the territorial structure and the formation and transformation factors of the denominational space in the South-East Baltic. The complexity of the denominational structure of the local population stems from the centuries-long position of this region as a political buffer zone.

We calculate the potential denominational structure and the potential religious fractionalisation index at the level of basic territorial units and regions southeast of the Baltic Sea. Based on this, we identify the main components of the territorial structure of the denominational space, which includes three denominational shields and contact zones between them. From a practical viewpoint, these components suggest a new variant of the territorial differentiation of the Baltic region. This variant has only limited relevance to ethnic and socio-economic zoning.

Keywords: denominational space, North-West Russia, Baltic States, Belarus

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The Baltic region is divided into three distinct parts as regards religious denominations: the Lutheran North and West, the Catholic South, and the Orthodox East. This cultural-geographical division of the region is very similar to that based on socio-economic parameters: the rich North, the moderately performing South,



and the relatively poor East. The three branches of Christianity converge south-east of the Baltic Sea, which makes their meeting place an ethnocultural buffer.

Our study aims to describe the territorial structure of the denominational space of the South-East Baltic and to identify factors governing its formation and transformation.

The study region includes the Baltics (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania) and Russia's North-West (Saint Petersburg and the Leningrad, Novgorod, Pskov, and Kaliningrad regions). In this study, we use a broader definition of the Baltic region, which includes the Republic of Belarus [1]. This made it possible to define the borders of the key structural components of the denominational space of the South-East Baltic in greater detail.

State of knowledge. Studies of denominational spaces (or religious landscapes) are often closely connected to the geographical investigation of the cultural diversity of the world [2; 3] large multi-denominational countries (the US [4], Russia [5]), or small territories with a complex ethno-denominational structure of the population [6–11, and others]. In the second case, studies into today's denominational geography are the key to solving political problems that arise when ethnocultural mosaics of territories are transformed by wars and migration. Usually, such works examine long-term changes in religious landscapes [12; 13].

Many researchers pay attention to the countries of the former Socialist camp, which are undergoing ethno-denominational transformations caused by accelerating migration processes that often have a strong national component. Most studies into the changing denominational structure of the population in the Baltic region focus on the ethno-political problems of the development of countries and territories. This applies chiefly to the Baltic States [14–16]. However, there is literature considering the current changes in the denominational space of Russia and other post-Soviet countries [5; 17; 18].

Most studies in denominational geography are historical-geographical investigations. Some of the works focusing on the region employ statistics of the 18th–19th centuries (inspection reports and data from the Russian Imperial Census of 1897) and of the early 20th century [19–22, and others]. Some researchers have focused on the denominational geography of the Republic of Belarus [23], and the Saint Petersburg [24] and Pskov [25; 26] regions. Earlier, we conducted a historical-geographical analysis of changes in the ethnic composition of the basic territorial units (dis-

tricts, counties) of North-West Russia [27], Estonia, and Latvia [28] from the late 19th century until today. This analysis laid the groundwork for this research.

Sources and conceptual framework. In our study, we employed data from the first Russian Imperial Census of 1897, the Soviet censuses of 1959 and 1989, the Russian federal census of 2010¹, the Belarusian census of 2009, and the Estonian, Latvian, and Lithuanian censuses of 2011². Recent statistics were processed at the level of basic territorial units – municipalities in the Russian Federation, the Republic of Belarus, and Lithuania, counties in Estonia, and districts in Latvia (as before 2009).

We relied on the traditional (ethnoreligious) understanding of denominational spaces. However, one of the founders of this approach, Pavel Puchkov, emphasised that, although religious communities should not be identified with ethnic ones [29], it is important to explore the connection between ethnic groups and religions.

Most studies distinguish two major territorial components of a denominational (religious) space: the spiritual component (the religious affiliation of the believers) and the religious-cultural infrastructure [30]. Sometimes, researchers draw difference between confessional and religious spaces. They consider the former as a category that has such parameters as structure, dimensions, and morphology [6]. For example, Sergey Safronov [22] identifies the following macro-level elements of confessional spaces: 1) large denominational shields formed by the world religions (Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism); 2) contact area where the zones of influence of the world religions overlap.

The study region is dominated by only one world religion. However, three of its major branches are practised there: Orthodoxy, Catholicism, and Lutheranism. In terms of geography, these branches can be likened to ‘minor confessional shields’. Their junctions coincide to an extent with the main ‘cultural rifts’ of the study region.

Denominational shields have major and minor cores. In the Baltic, there are two minor shield cores: the Catholic one in Lithu-

¹ *Demoscope Weekly*, 2018, Institute of Demography of the National Research University "Higher School of Economics", available at: <http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/search.php> (accessed 15.08.2018) (In Russ.).

² *Population statistics of Eastern Europe & former USSR*, 2018, available at: <http://pop-stat.mashke.org/> (accessed 15.08.2018).



ania and the Lutheran one in Estonia. In the east and south-east, the areas dominated by Lutheranism and Catholicism are bordered by the Orthodox shield with its core in the centre of the East European Plain (Russia and Belarus). Since confessional shields often overlap, it is important to distinguish clearly between their cores and contact zones. In studying the denominational structure of a population, researchers often employ an analogue of B. M. Ekkel's ethnic fractionalisation index (EFI) [31] – the religious fractionalisation index (RFI) [21]. Similarly to the EFI, the RFI can be calculated for any territorial unit using the formula: $IRM=1 - \sum (P_i)^2$, where P_i is the proportion of people practising i^{th} religion in the region ($i=1,2,\dots$).

Earlier, we proposed to employ this index to identify two classes of contact zones: latent (RFI of 0.2–0.4) and pronounced ones (RFI of above 0.4) [21]. For example, an RFI of 0.2 describes a denominational structure where the proportion of people practising the dominant religion is approximately 90 % and an RFI of 0.4 a structure where each fourth is not affiliated with the dominant religion. We classify the areas with an RFI of below 0.2 as cores and those with a higher RFI as contact zones. Thus, the threshold for a territory to be classed as a denomination shield core is 90 % of the population practising a single religion (or those potentially affiliated with this religion).

When relevant official statistics are unavailable (for instance, religious affiliation was not monitored by the Soviet censuses of 1959 and 1989, and the post-Soviet Russian and Belarusian censuses of 2009 and 2010), specialists in denominational geography suggest computing the potential denominational composition of the population. Such a calculation relies on the traditional religious affiliations of ethnic groups populating the study area [22]. The potential religious fractionalisation index (PRFI) of an administrative unit can be computed in a similar way. Since, in our study, we analysed simultaneously the territories of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Belarus, and the Baltic States, we employed this index.

Orthodox Christians and Old Believers. The first branch of Christianity to appear in the region was Orthodox Christianity. On the territory of today's North-West Russia and Belarus, Orthodox Christianity became the dominant religion right after the Baptism of Rus' in 988. Later, it spread to the territory of today's East Latvia (Latgale), at the time controlled by Polotsk princes. However, in the 13th century, the area was taken over by German military orders.

Orthodox Christianity started to reclaim the Baltic (primarily, the territories of today's Estonia and Latvia) during the Livonian War of 1558–1583. In the second half of the 17th century, after the *Raskol*, Old Believers were migrating to the lands bordering on Russia, including the Western coast of Lake Peipus and Latgale.

The Russian Empire incorporated the Swedish provinces of Estland and Livonia after the Great Northern War of 1700–1721. This sparked a new wave of migration of Orthodox Christians (primarily, Russians) to these territories. A smaller number of Orthodox migrants arrived in Lithuania after the third partition of Poland in 1795. The Vilno province was home to many Belarusians practising Orthodox Christianity.

According to the Russian Imperial Census of 1897, the highest proportion of Orthodox Christians (Old Believers included) was in the Novgorod and Pskov provinces (above 95%). These territories constituted the core of the Orthodox Christianity shield. The proportion of Orthodox Christians was significantly smaller in Saint Petersburg (85.9%) and the Saint Petersburg province (78%). Orthodox Christians and Old Believers accounted for approximately 15% of the population on the territory of today's Estonia, 12.7% on that of today's Latvia, and 6.3% of today's Lithuania (table 1).

Table 1

The proportion of Orthodox Christians and Old Believers among the religious population (the potential proportion of Orthodox Christians is given in parentheses),%³

	1897	1959	1989	2010/2011
Saint Petersburg / Leningrad	85.9	(92.7)	(95.1)	(95.8)
Leningrad region /				
Saint Petersburg province	78.0	(96.4)	(97.4)	(96.9)
Novgorod region / province	98.3	(98.9)	(98.5)	(98.0)
Pskov region / province	95.2	(98.7)	(98.6)	(98.3)
Kaliningrad region		(94.1)	(95.5)	(94.6)
Estonia	14.9	(22.6)	(35.7)	35.2 (28.8)
Latvia	12.7	(31.3)	(42.6)	(32.7)
Lithuania	6.3	(10.4)	(12.5)	4.9 (7.7)

³ Calculated by the authors based on: *Demoscope Weekly*, 2018, Institute of Demography of the National Research University "Higher School of Economics", available at: <http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/search.php>; *Population statistics of Eastern Europe & former USSR*, 2018, available at: <http://pop-stat.mashke.org> (accessed 15.08.2018).



In the Soviet period, the major factor behind the transformation of the potential denominational structure of Estonia's, Latvia's, and Lithuania's population was Russians, Belarusians, and, to a lesser degree, Ukrainians migrating into the Baltic republics. Thus, the proportion of potential Orthodox Christian population was rapidly increasing, particularly, in Estonia and Latvia. At the same time, all the regions of Russia's North-West were becoming the cores of Orthodoxy-dominated territories.

In the post-Soviet period, the outflow of Russian speakers from the Baltics was accompanied by a reduction in the proportion of potential Orthodox Christian population. Here, it is important to consider the correlation between the actual and potential denominational structure of Estonia's and Latvia's population. The 2011 census taken in the two countries contained a question about religion. In Estonia, 54.1 % of respondents said that they were not affiliated with any religion, 2.4 % could not identify their affiliation, and 14.4 % refused to answer⁴. Among those who did not identify themselves as atheists or non-religious, 35.2 % said that they were Orthodox Christians (35.2 %), which is above the proportion of potential Orthodox population (28.8 %) in the country. It is reasonable to assume that Orthodox Christianity is a consolidating force for Estonia's Russian speakers. However, the situation is different in Lithuania, where Russian speakers have been secularised to a greater extent than Lithuanians have been.

Roman Catholics. The spread of Catholicism in the region began as late as the 13th century. At first, it was driven by German military orders (the Knights of the Sword from 1202 and the Livonian Order from 1237). The Catholic expansion broke in the east against the Orthodox shield and created a cultural barrier that has survived to this day, coinciding with Russia's western border.

However, the Catholic shield was to undergo serious changes. In the 14th century, Lithuania started to adopt Catholicism (following the 1385 Union of Krewo). The process was completed in the second half of the 16th century after the signing of the 1569 Union of Lublin, which established the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. The new state occupied most of the Baltic. However, following the Polish–Swedish war of 1621–1626, the Commonwealth lost Livonia, i. e. most of the territories of today's Estonia and Latvia with the exception of Latgale. Under Swedish rule, Lutheranism replaced Catholicism in Estland and Livonia.

⁴ *Population statistics of Eastern Europe & former USSR*, 2011, available at: <http://pop-stat.mashke.org/estonia-religion2011.htm> (accessed 25.08.2018).

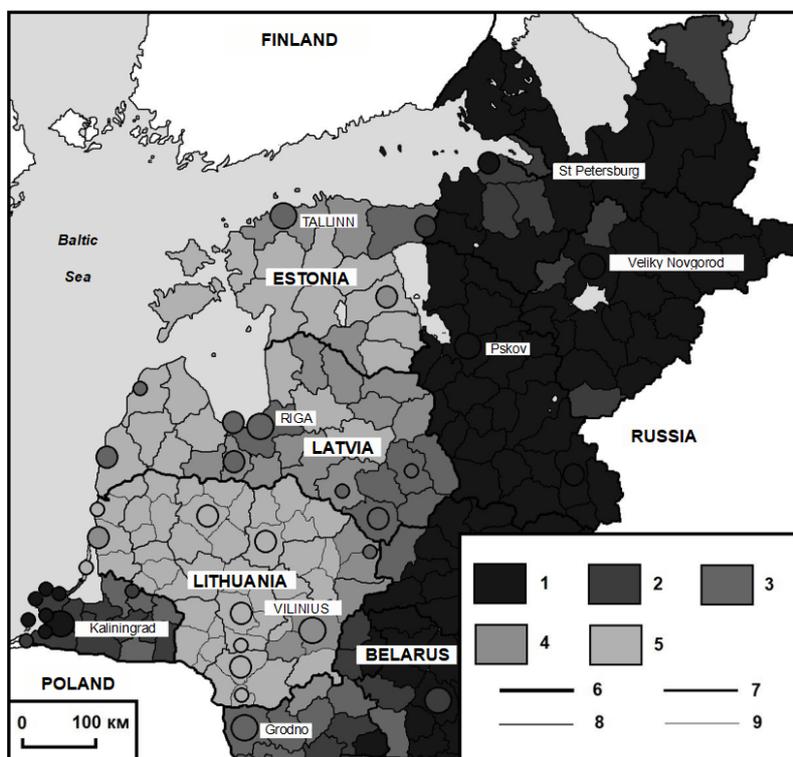


Fig. 1. The proportion of potential Orthodox Christians, % (as in 2009 in the Republic of Belarus, 2010 in Russia, 2011 in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; prepared by the authors).

The proportion of the potential Orthodox population (%):

1 – ≥ 95.0 ; 2 – 90.0–94.9; 3 – 25.0–89.9; 4 – 10.0–24.9; 5 – ≤ 9.9 .

Borders: 6 – of states and regions (Russia and Belarus); 7 – counties (Estonia and Lithuania); 8 – districts (Russia, Belarus, and Latvia); 9 – municipalities (Lithuania).

As a result, the Catholic core of the region shifted to Lithuania. Moreover, the Catholic shield moved southward to establish itself in Lithuania and Latgale (at the time, parts of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth). After the partitions of Poland (1772 and 1795), this region remained Catholic. The only exception was the former Duchy of Courland, which adopted Lutheranism.

According to the first Russian imperial census, which was carried out in 1897, the proportion of Catholics was the highest in the Kovno and Vilno provinces (75.8%, today's Lithuania) and in Latgale, the western part of the Vitebsk province (50%, today's eastern Latvia) [12]. In Russia's North-West, an increased proportion of Catholics was observed in Saint Petersburg (4.2%), which was accounted for by the Western Europeans settling in the capital (table 2).

Table 2

**The proportion of Roman Catholics among the religious population
(the potential proportion of Roman Catholics is given
in parentheses), %⁵**

	1897	1959	1989	2010/2011
Saint Petersburg / Leningrad	4.2	(0.6)	(0.2)	(0.1)
Leningrad region / Saint Petersburg province	1.4	(0.3)	(0.2)	(0.1)
Novgorod region / province	0.3	(0.1)	(0.1)	(0.1)
Pskov region / province	0.8	(0.1)	(0.2)	(0.1)
Kaliningrad region		(4.2)	(2.6)	(1.4)
Estonia	0.4	(0.3)	(0.4)	0.9 (0.3)
Latvia	20.2	(12.4)	(10.2)	(11.3)
Lithuania	75.8	(87.8)	(86.6)	92.2 (91.7)

In the Soviet and post-Soviet period, the proportion of Catholics in North-West Russia was insignificant. The percentage of Latgale Catholics in Latvia rapidly reduced. In Latvia, a high rate of natural increase in the autochthonous population caused the growth in the proportion of Catholics. A slight excess of the percentage of Catholics in Lithuania (calculated as a proportion of people who specified their religious affiliation) over that of potential Catholics testifies to the important role religion plays in the self-identification of Lithuanians.

Protestants. The Lutheran component of the regional denominational space emerged in the 17th century, following the Polish–Swedish war of 1621–1626, when the Kingdom of Sweden incorporated Estland and Livonia. Lutheranism was adopted in the Duchy of Courland, which remained under the control of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. In the same century, the Treaty of Stolbovo granted lands south-west of the Gulf of Finland, called Ingria, to Sweden. Later, that territory was populated by Savakot and Äyrämöiset. These ethnic groups from Lutheran Finland were collectively referred to as the Ingrians. After Ingria became part of the Russian Empire, the Finns remained on the land. In 1940–1947, they underwent a series of deportations [21].

⁵ Calculated by the authors based on: *Demoscope Weekly*, 2018, Institute of Demography of the National Research University "Higher School of Economics", available at: <http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/search.php>; *Population statistics of Eastern Europe & former USSR*, 2018, available at: <http://pop-stat.mashke.org> (accessed 15.08.2018).

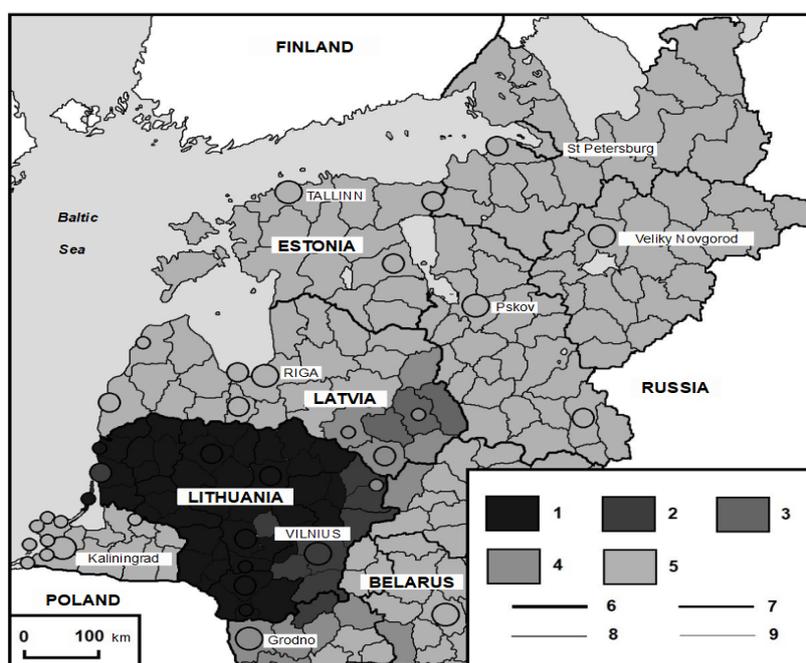


Fig. 2. The proportion of potential Catholics, % (as of 2009 in the Republics of Belarus, as of 2010 in Russia, and 2011 in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; prepared by the authors).

The proportion of potential Catholics (%): 1 – ≥ 90.0 ; 2 – 70.0–89.9;
3 – 50.0–69.9; 4 – 10.0–49.9; 5 – ≤ 9.9 .

Borders: 6 of states and regions (Russia and Belarus);

7 counties (Estonia and Lithuania); 8 districts (Russia, Belarus, and Latvia);

9 municipalities (Lithuania).

A new wave of migrations of Lutherans (Estonians and Latvian from the Estland and Livonian provinces) to the Saint Petersburg and Pskov provinces occurred in the second half of the 19th century. According to the 1897 Russian imperial census, the proportion of Protestants (primarily, Lutherans) was the highest in the Estland (89.7%), Livonian (79.6%), and Courland (76.2%) provinces⁶. The proportion of Protestants (most of them, Ingrian Finns and Estonians) was considerable in the Saint Petersburg province and the capital (table 3).

⁶ The first general census of the population of the Russian Empire in 1897, the distribution of the population by religion and region, 1905, *Demoscope Weekly*, available at: http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/ssp/rus_rel_97.php?reg=0 (accessed 20.08.2018) (in Russ.).

Table 3

**The proportion of Protestants among the religious population
(the potential proportion of Protestants given in the parentheses),%⁷**

	1897	1959	1989	2010/2011
Saint Petersburg / Leningrad	7.5	(0.5)	(0.3)	(0.2)
Leningrad region / Saint Petersburg province	19.9	(2.2)	(1.0)	(0.5)
Novgorod region / province	0.9	(0.6)	(0.3)	(0.2)
Pskov region / province	2.0	(0.8)	(0.4)	(0.2)
Kaliningrad region		(0.3)	(0.3)	(0.9)
Estonia	84.0	(76.3)	(63.0)	27.2 (69.9)
Latvia	59.1	(54.4)	(45.5)	(54.4)
Lithuania	3.4	(0.7)	(0.2)	1.9 (0.1)

In the USSR, the contact zone between the Orthodox and Lutheran shields shifted to the Baltics. The proportion of potential Protestants in Russia's North-West reduced to insignificant levels. In Estonia and Latvia, it was rapidly decreasing until the disintegration of the Soviet Union. In the post-Soviet period, the outflow of Russian speakers from Estonia and Latvia caused an increase in the proportion of potential Protestants. However, secularisation and the spread of atheism, observed in Protestant communities in the 20th/21st centuries, occurred at a higher rate. A 2011 analysis of the denominational structure of Estonia shows that this conclusion is accurate. Among the respondents who specified their religious affiliation, fewer people identified themselves as Lutherans than as Orthodox Christians. The total proportion of Protestants among those who did not identify themselves as either atheists or non-religious reached 27.2% (and that of Lutherans 21.6%). Therefore, in our cartographic analysis at the level of basic administrative units, we relied on the proportion of potential Protestants rather than the actual numbers revealed by the 2011 survey (fig. 3).

⁷ Calculated by the authors based on: *Demoscope Weekly*, 2018, Institute of Demography of the National Research University "Higher School of Economics", available at: <http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/search.php>; *Population statistics of Eastern Europe & former USSR*, 2018, available at: <http://pop-stat.mashke.org> (accessed 15.08.2018).

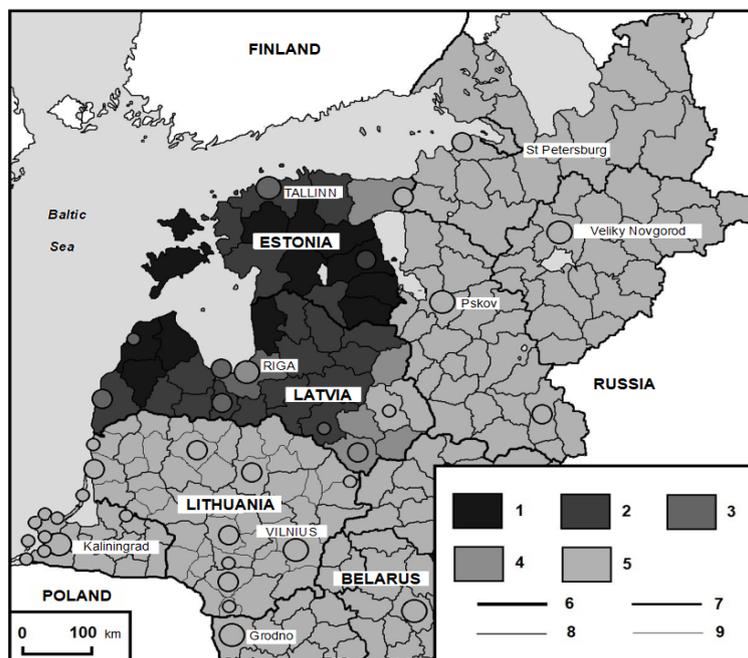


Fig. 3. The proportion of potential Protestants, % (as of 2009 in the Republics of Belarus, as of 2010 in Russia, and 2011 in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; prepared by the authors).

The proportion of potential Protestants (%): 1 – ≥ 90.0 ; 2 – 70.0–89.9; 3 – 50.0–69.9; 4 – 10.0–49.9; 5 – ≤ 9.9 .

Borders: 6 – of states and regions (Russia and Belarus); 7 – counties (Estonia and Lithuania); 8 – districts (Russia, Belarus, and Latvia); 9 – municipalities (Lithuania).

Major components of the territorial structure of denominational space. At the end of the 19th century, Russian regions within the borders of the then provinces and the Baltics within today's borders were classified as follows based on the religious fractionalisation index (table 4).

The core of the Orthodox shield comprised the Novgorod and Pskov regions (an RFI of below 0.2). Latent contact zones (an RFI of 0.2–0.4) were found in the Saint Petersburg province, Saint Petersburg, and Estonia (within today's borders). The capital and its province were situated on the edge of the territory dominated by Orthodox Christianity, superimposed by the Lutheran shield. At the time, Estonia was the periphery of the Protestant (Lutheran) shield, partly superimposed by the Orthodox shield. The counties that bordered Saint Petersburg on the south and were populated by Lutheran Ingrian Finns constituted a pronounced contact zone.

Table 4

Religious fractionalisation index of 1897 and the potential religious fractionalisation index of 1959, 1989, and 2010/2011⁸

	1897	1959	1989	2010/2011
Saint Petersburg / Leningrad	0.2539	0.1415	0.0956	0.0828
Leningrad region / Saint Petersburg province	0.3512	0.0692	0.0507	0.0604
Novgorod region / province	0.0333	0.0218	0.0299	0.0402
Pskov region / province	0.0932	0.0266	0.0270	0.0332
Kaliningrad region		0.1126	0.0867	0.1046
Estonia	0.2718	0.3672	0.4757	0.4290
Latvia	0.5935	0.5911	0.6005	0.5843
Lithuania	0.4043	0.2180	0.2343	0.1525

Today's territories of Lithuania and Latvia could also be considered as pronounced contact zones (RFI of above 0.4). Mostly Catholic Lithuania was superimposed by the Orthodox shield, whereas Latvia became the meeting place of all three regional denominational shields: Lutheran, Orthodox, and Catholic.

When pinpointing the minor cores of the Lutheran and Catholic shields at the level of counties, we found out a number of interesting facts. Lutheranism-dominated territories had three minor cores: in the east of the Estland province and in the central parts of the Livonian and Courland provinces. These cores lay in the interior yet peripheral parts of the provinces, at a distance from the administrative and economic centres [21]. The minor core of Catholicism-dominated territories situated in the Kovno province, whereas the Vilno province and Latgale (the western part of the Vitebsk province) constituted pronounced contact zones.

In the Soviet and post-Soviet period, all the regions of Russia's North-West became part of the Orthodox core. This was explained by a steep reduction in the proportion of traditionally non-Orthodox ethnic groups. At the same time, Lithuania turned into a multi-denominational country, having become, together with Poland, part of the major core of the Catholic shield. In the Soviet period, Estonia became a pronounced contact zone. Just as Latvia, it is today one of the most multi-denominational countries of the Baltic region.

⁸ Calculated by the authors based on: *Demoscope Weekly*, 2018, Institute of Demography of the National Research University "Higher School of Economics", available at: <http://www.demoscope.ru/weekly/search.php>; *Population statistics of Eastern Europe & former USSR*, 2018, available at: <http://pop-stat.mashke.org> (accessed 15.08.2018).

An analysis of the micro-level PRFI makes it possible to identify the boundaries of denominational shields in the South-East Baltic (fig. 4).

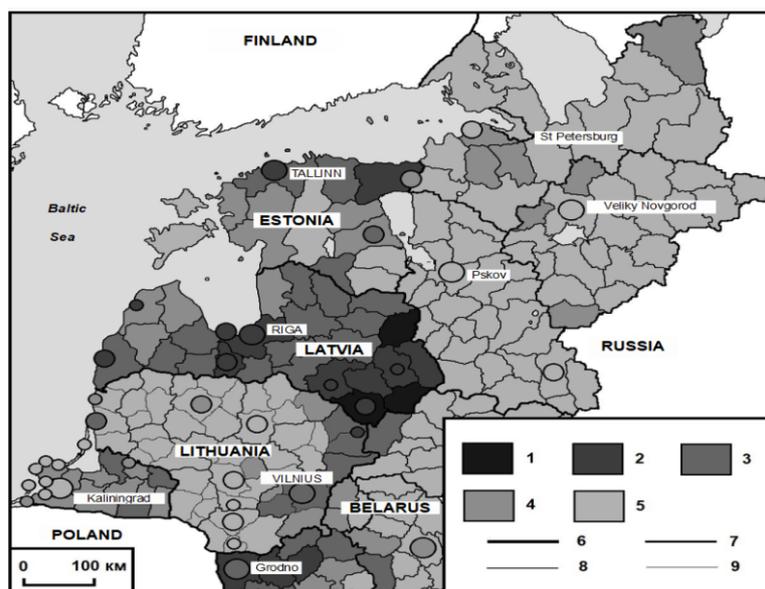


Fig. 4. Potential Religious Fractionalisation Index (as of 2009 in the Republics of Belarus, as of 2010 in Russia, and 2011 in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania; prepared by the authors).

Potential Religious Fractionalisation Index: 1 – ≥ 0.600 ; 2 – $0.400-0.599$;
3 – $0.200-0.399$; 4 – $0.100-0.199$; 5 – ≤ 0.099 .

Borders: 6 – of states and regions (Russia and Belarus);

7 – counties (Estonia and Lithuania); 8 – districts (Russia, Belarus, and Latvia);

9 – municipalities (Lithuania).

The region's 'thickest' denominational shield is the Orthodox one. Today, its core includes all Russian regions and almost all regions of the Republic of Belarus (the only exception is the Grodno region). However, the external boundaries of the Orthodox area lie beyond the borders of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus. The contact zones of the Orthodox Christian shield do not coincide with the borders of Russia, Estonia, and Latvia. Ida-Viru County (Estonia) and Latgale (Eastern Latvia) constitute the interior periphery of the Orthodox shield. The capitals of Estonia and Latvia and their environs, as well as some other cities in these countries, can be classified as the external periphery of the Orthodox component of the denominational space. The contact zone comprises most of Estonia and a considerable part of Latvia.



At the Lithuanian – Belarusian border, the boundary of the Orthodox shield changes its nature. Part of the contact zone lies in the east of Lithuania (including Vilnius). However, south of Lithuania, in the Grodno region, the Catholic shield superimposes the Orthodox one and creates a contact zone in Belarus.

The second ‘thickest’ shield is Catholic. Its core comprises most of Lithuania (with the exception of its eastern periphery and Vilnius). Nevertheless, the Catholic shield continues in Latgale, a region that serves as a pronounced contact zone or, more precisely, the meeting point of three religions: Catholicism, Orthodox Christianity, and Lutheranism. Another contact zone is the extension of the Catholic area in the Grodno region of Belarus. The Catholic-Orthodox boundary in the West (Russia’s Kaliningrad region) and the Protestant-Orthodox boundary in the north (Latvia’s Kurzeme, Zemgale, and Selonia) function as a barrier.

The ‘thinnest’ denominational shield in the region is the Protestant (Lutheran) one. Covering Estonia and most of Latvia (without Latgale), it is an extension of the ‘great’ shield that includes the neighbouring Nordic countries (Sweden and Finland). Southeast of the Baltic Sea, this shield does not have expressed cores. The area has characteristics of a ‘contact zone’, which become pronounced in capitals and large cities. On the one hand, the ‘thinness’ of the Protestant shield is explained by the active expansion of Orthodox Christianity in the 18th/20th centuries. On the other hand, it is a result of many Protestants having turned away from religion, or, in other words, of the local population becoming increasingly secular and atheistic.

Conclusions. The South-East Baltic has the most complex denominational composition across the Baltic region. This territory is the meeting place of three branches of Christianity that define the cultural landscape of the area: Lutheranism, Orthodox Christianity, and Catholicism. Our study identified the major components of the territorial structure of the regional denominational space, including three denominational shields and contact zones between them. The most pronounced zone of denominational contact within the study region is Latgale, where all three major religions are practised.

The oldest and thickest denominational shield in the study region is the Orthodox one. Its core includes the regions of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Belarus. The edges of the shield advance into Estonia and Latvia, both countries accommodating zones of denominational contact. The second oldest and

thickest denominational shield is Catholic. Its core lies in Lithuania and its edges form salients in Latgale (Eastern Latvia) and the Grodno region of Belarus. The youngest and thinnest denominational shield in the region is the Protestant one. Its major component is Lutheran religion, which gained ground on the territories of today's Estonia and Latvia in the 17th century. Although this denominational shield does not have pronounced cores, it has many zones of contact with the Orthodox shield. The gradual dissolution of this denominational shield is a result of potential Protestants (Estonians and Latvians) turning away from religion.

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**EXPERIENCE
OF THE BĂILE-FELIX
TOURIST SYSTEM
(ROMANIA)
FOR THE PROTECTION
AND PROMOTION
OF THE GREY SEAL
AS A BRAND ON THE HEL
PENINSULAR (POLAND)**

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R. Buhaş²
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*The Pârâul Peșea Nature Reserve, localized in Bihor County (Romania), in the area of the Băile Felix rural tourist system, gained international interest and a regime of protected area due to the existence of an ecosystem with thermal waters, being also the habitat of certain rare fauna species (*Scardinius racovitzai*, *Melanopsis parreyssi*) and especially flora species amongst which the tertiary relict unique lotus flower *Nymphaea lotus var. thermalis*. Situated at the seashore of Hel Peninsula, Gulf of Gdansk, Baltic Sea, the Hel Marine Station (HMS), thanks to the project to restore grey seals to the Polish waters, has been one of the most interesting tourist attractions in the Baltic region. Using specific analysis methods and instruments, through monitoring over a period of several years and by creating a complex data base, the authors created conditions for a systemic analytical endeavour focused on the actual condition of the elements which allow to compare these tourist destinations and find similarities between natural attractiveness of both places. At brand level, the lotus flower as well as the grey seal has been situated, ever since their appearance, at the basis of both resorts' development, being found in the local, national and international collective mentality and in the iconography of a number of institutions. Identification of the causes which led to the almost total extinction of rare species, redefinition of the degree of knowledge and awareness of their value in the local mentality, the actual place occupied by the reservations and their elements in the promotion and rebranding actions represent the approach directions which compose the basic structure of this scientific endeavor.*

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INTRODUCTION

Situated West to Șomleu Hill (344 m), between Western Plain and Hills, the *1 Mai-Băile Felix* rural spa tourist system has gradually developed mostly due to its thermal water resources, favorable, from geological point of view, to anthropic exploitation and valorization, especially through tourism. Thus, the geological component, through its structure, lithology, chemical composition, thermal features etc. was reflected in numerous specialty studies [1- 6] as playing a significant role in defining the economic profile of the two resorts [7; 8]. The area with thermal waters from the natural ascending springs mainly serves as supporting natural resource feature for other elements of tourist attraction, as well as through its multiplying role in the diversification of tourist resources.

Out of the flora and fauna elements to which the studied area serves as a natural habitat, the *Nymphaea lotus var. thermalis* (thermal water lily, or *Drețe* in Romanian popular language) is of particular importance. It is a tertiary relict and a unique case in Europe, since it is a species of tropical plant that has somehow managed to thrive in temperate climate conditions [9 -14]. The water lily was declared a monument of nature in 1931 at the initiative of the botanist Alexandru Borza. At an altitude of 140 m, in an area of thermal water from several natural springs, one of which is the famous *Ochiul Țiganului* (*Gypsy` Eye*, fig. 2), the *Pârâul Peștea* Nature Reserve was founded (fig. 1) in 1932 to protect this natural wonder.

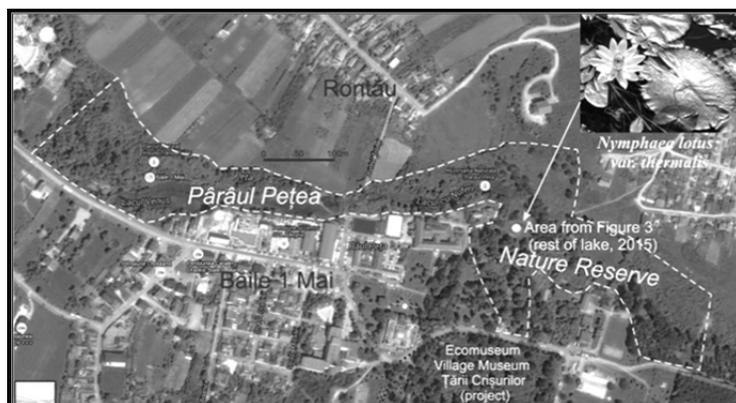


Fig. 1. Geographical position
of the Pârâul Peștea Nature Reserve in Romania

In 1995, 4 ha territory of nature reserve and a protected zone was delimited through local regulations and included into the network of Nature 2000 sites (later extended to 48.9 ha) under the administra-



tion of *Țării Crișurilor* Museum from Oradea (until 2015)¹. The surface of a lake that is located on this territory reached about 600 m² (fig. 1), until December 2013, when it was demonstrated that the lake showed the first significant signs of depletion.

After 1990, the chaotic development of the tourist system and irrational exploitation of the basic tourist resource – thermal waters – through tourist and household activities have led to the decrease of thermal waters discharge and consequently to the depletion and destruction of the habitat for the three protected rare species: *Nymphaea lotus var. thermalis*, *Scardinius erythrophthalmus racovitzai* – Racoviță's Rudd, endemic species of fresh water fish adapted to thermal waters and *Melanopsis parreyssi* – endemic species of snail relict [15–17]. It must be noted, however, that the number of almost extinct species which populate the reservation (according to The Red List of Threatened Species elaborated by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and EU Nature 2000 Programme) is much bigger, which amplifies the importance of this natural site and its role in the development of tourism².



Fig. 2. Central part of Nature Reserve – Ochiul Țiganului (Gypsy` Eye) in 2010 and 2015

Apart from the problems caused by the reduction of water discharge (which researchers and mass media have been signalling since 2009), there are other anthropogenic environmental problems that occur in this area, such as natural silting in *1 Mai*, where some specialists noticed that the lake's depth had reduced to the minimum levels of about 0.30 m [5, 18]. Researchers are not the only ones who

¹ Bihor County Council Decision n°19/1995; Law n°5/2000, adopted by Romanian Parliament, Official Monitor, no.152/12 April, 20004; European Commission-Environment. Nature 2000 centrepiece of EU Nature at biodiversity policy. (<http://natura2000.mmediu.ro/upl//formulare/ROSCI0098%20-%20F.pdf>) (accessed 20.11.2018).

² Red List of Threatened Species elaborated by International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). 2015. URL: <http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/full/19948/0> (accessed 20.11.2018).

talk of the dangerous effects and causes of the disappearance of this tourist icon [10, 19–22]. In his poem, *Pusztul a Lótusz*, the poet Ady Endre (b.1906) mentions an imminent period of human-caused degradation of the lake and thermal lotus (through, for example, industrial processing of flowers for liqueurs and perfumes) [23].

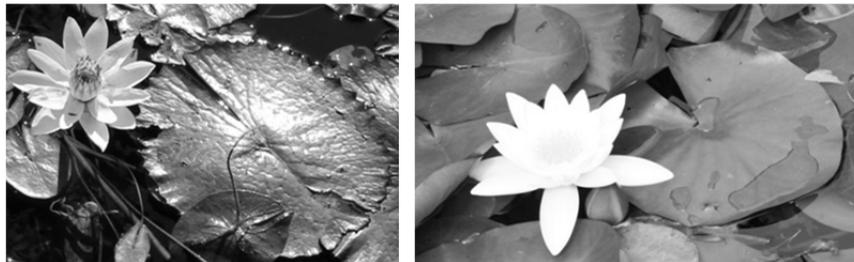


Fig. 3. Differences (leaf) between *Nymphaea lotus* var. *thermalis* (left) from Petea Lake and *Nymphaea alba* (right) from Băile Felix (colonized in artificial lake)

The Petea lake and runlet from *1 Mai* is the only habitat of *Nymphaea lotus* var. *thermalis* (fig. 3). Yet the species is sometimes confused with the colony of a more common version of lotus, *Nymphaea alba* (fig. 3), which is located in the anthropic lake in the *Băile Felix* central park. This species is different from the protected one, but since there is a lack of sufficient public awareness campaigns, the protected species is often wrongly placed in Băile Felix.

The Hel Marine Station (HMS) was established in 1992 and is a field station in the organizational structure of the Institute of Oceanography in the Faculty of Oceanography and Geography at the University of Gdańsk. The location of the station is almost at the edge of the Hel Peninsula, in the middle part of the Gulf of Gdansk, which allows one to conduct research both in the coastal zone and on the open sea (fig. 4).

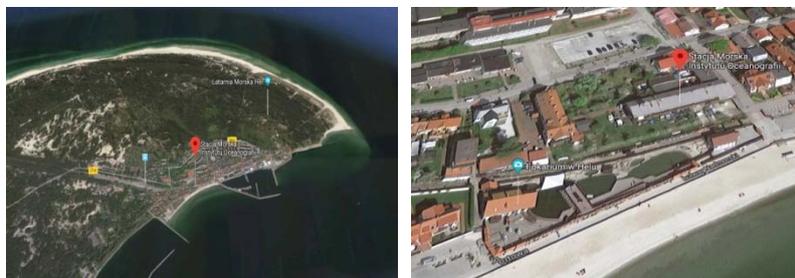


Fig. 4. Hel Marine Station at the edge of the Hel Peninsula (left) and “Fokarium” with aquariums (right)

The tasks of the station include studies of biological, chemical, physical and geological processes in the coastal zone and the depth of the sea. The station was created to meet research needs that arose as a result of anthropogenic processes related to population growth, changes in the development of the peninsula and the development of tourist infrastructure with constantly increasing tourist numbers. The influx of holidaymakers who come to the peninsula to sail, windsurf, dive or simply enjoy their vacation time contributes significantly to the degradation of the natural environment of the seashore and water Gulf of Gdansk and Puck Bay regions [24].



Fig. 5. *Fokarium* with grey seals (left) and breeding tanks (right) ³

The station has aquariums and breeding tanks with the flow of sea water that mimic natural conditions, which allows for the study of Baltic fauna and flora (fig. 5). Apart from research, the tank system enabled the implementation of a long-term project to reintroduce grey seals to the Polish coast of the Baltic Sea. The seal sanctuary operating at the *Fokarium* station with the seals caught in the Baltic Sea or bred at the station (*Halichoerus Grypus*) is considered the greatest natural attraction of Hel. Every year, nearly half a million people visit this center of research, breeding and rehabilitation of grey seals.

OBJECTIVES

The lotus in thermal waters of *Băile Felix* and the grey seal have both become the icons of their respective locations. At Hel, shops offer a whole range of souvenirs referring to the popular fishing grounds and seal stations. However, the seals of Hel are not loved by everybody. Local fishermen have long been accusing seals of destroying their nets and feeding on fish. Unlike *Băile Felix*, where tourists

³ HEL MARINE STATION. URL: <http://www.hel.ug.edu.pl/info/helmarinestation.htm> (access date: 20.11.2018); Wikimedia commons. URL: <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=44341505> (access date: 20.11.2018).

and residents share the positive image of the local icon, some Hel inhabitants consider grey seals to be mere pests. And no amount of scientific research that establishes a direct link between the lack of fish and overfishing can change this negative image.

The main purpose of this study is to examine the actual state of the *Pârâul Peșea* nature reserve and its elements, on the one hand, and the grey seal population at the Marine Hel Station as a tourism resource and brand, on the other, and to compare the degree of awareness and the role they play in the life of their local communities. This implies the need to evaluate the role of anthropogenic factors in creating the real picture of the existing conditions specific to the reserve and the need to reintroduce the grey seal to the southern coast of the Baltic sea. This goal can be achieved by identifying, analyzing and correlating certain elements of the geographical, biological, demographic and tourist type, especially those of cultural, social and economic nature.

Structurally, there are four research objectives that emerge from the socio-economic aspect of the study: evaluating the level of familiarity with the reservations in the local communities (residents of the city of Oradea and the municipality of Sânmartin); identifying the causes of the reserves' degradation; suggesting ways to revitalize them; and identifying tourism development strategies for the protected areas.

METHODOLOGY

The methodological component of this study is based on an interdisciplinary approach, using geographic [25–31], statistical and sociological methods and instruments [32–37]. By applying and interpreting certain questionnaires constructed upon the above-mentioned objectives, the research targeted quantitative and qualitative aspects.

The qualitative component was accomplished by means of a focus group, a method which is highly used in socio-geographic and interdisciplinary research [38–41]. The focus group was made up of specialists from various domains tangent to the theme (geographer, geologist, biologist, hydrologist, historian, sociologist, economist) with the purpose of analyzing important aspects concerning the studied issue in detail and receiving expert opinions on the results obtained from questionnaire [10].

Apart from the statistical and special analyses generated by data collection from the field and the creation of a data base, the quantitative component targeted the complementary sociological aspect and involved a questionnaire focused on the degree of awareness of causes of degradation, plans for revitalization and promotion of the reser-



vation, to which the reference socio-demographic data was added. The degree of awareness was determined by a set of questions focused on the identification of landmarks defining the resorts and the availability of information sources. The causes of degradation of the reservation referred to the awareness of its actual state and causes which had contributed to it (including tourism specific activities). Revitalization of the reserve focuses on the identification of solutions and institutions involved in rectifying the existing situation. The promotion dimension emphasised the degree and ways in which the reservations could develop as internationally-attractive tourism destinations. All of these aspects were studied on the basis of socio-demographic data obtained through interviews and adjusted for the education level, occupation, gender, age, address and living conditions of the respondents. The interpretation of results generated by the field activity and by the questionnaires was completed with the special analysis graphically and cartographically transposed by means of the GIS specific to the administration of such data bases.

The method used was that of direct inquiry within which the data and information were gathered from the field by means of the semi-structured sociological questionnaire. The data analysis and results interpretation were accomplished with the help of the statistical analysis program for social sciences, SPSS, and structured according to the research specific objectives previously described.

The identification and definition of the target group, the homogenization of the significant sections [42;43] and the choice of the sampling method [33] (in this case of probabilistic type, stratified) helped reach a high level of sample representativeness with reference to the total population [44] and structured the logical course of the sociological investigation with interdisciplinary component. The variables used in the present research were as follows: gender, age, education level, occupation and marital status. As for the monthly income, 38.2 % of respondents declared that they had enough for a decent living but could not afford buying expensive things, while only 7 % were satisfied with their income, managing to have everything they needed without restraints. On the opposite side, 10.6 % of the subjects declare that their income could not even provide for their basic necessities.

In total, there were 337 respondents from Oradea and Sânmartin communes, with the following synthetic socio-demographic profile (table 1): average age of 38.2, medium to a higher level of education (45 %), not married (52.4 %), students or employed in different types of services as personnel with and without higher education, medium monthly income. 52.5 % of the respondents were female.

Table 1

Respondents` education, occupation and civil status

Socio-demographic characteristics		% of total
Level of education	8 grades	2.0
	10 grades, vocational schools	10.0
	11 – 12 grades with baccalaureate diploma	45.0
	technical school or college	11.0
	higher education	32.0
Occupation	individual household farmer	0.7
	worker	9.2
	worker in trade, tourism and other services	21.6
	technician, foreman, clerk	2.9
	higher education staff	11.1
	patron, entrepreneur, freelancer	7.2
	unemployed	2.6
	pensioner	16.7
students/pupils	28.1	
Civil status	not married	52.4
	married/cohabitation	37.8
	divorced	4.6
	widow(er)	4.6
	other	0.6

A similar methodology was used for Hel Marine Station (HMS). For the research on the perception and brand of the HMS, a literature query and a survey were conducted. 102 students of Gdańsk universities majoring in tourism and recreation took part in the research. The choice of students of the first year of studies was determined by the need to learn about the perception of both inhabitants of the Pomeranian Voivodeship and people from other regions of Poland. 36 men and 66 women took part in the study of the awareness of the HMS and the *Fokarium* seal sanctuary brand. 26 students came from the Pomeranian Voivodeship and the rest from other regions of Poland. The survey included 41 female students from the region where the *Fokarium* is located and 21 students from other provinces of the country. All respondents were in the range of 18–21 years and had completed high school.

ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND RESULTS

Defining the brand and the respective image for the spa tourist system is based on two components: the supporting element, the thermal waters, and the main element – unique species of the ther-



mal lotus. Both components predetermined the development of other elements of tourist attraction system through the history of this local community. One such element was the hot-water Rontău mill, operational at all seasons until the middle of the 20th century [45].

Brand, image and promotion in the Pârâul Peţea Nature Reserve

In the case of the *Pârâul Peţea* Nature Reserve, the regeneration of an almost extinct brand is not possible within the same category, but alternative solution must be explored, for example, transferring the brand into a different category or inventing a new category for the old brand [46]. The development of the image of *1 Mai-Băile Felix* spa tourist system can be described as spanning two time periods, each having its own specific features:

a.) The period before 1990 is defined by strict town planning rules at both resorts, by controlled and targeted development of the infrastructure and the promotion of the resorts' image by emphasizing local brand elements. Consider the following local hotel names inspired by natural features – *Lotus, Nufărul, Termal*, regional toponymy – *Crişana, Mureş, Someş, Poieniţa, Muncel*, or Latin mythology – *Ceres, Apollo-Felix*.

b.) The period after 1990 is marked by architectural chaos and multiplying institutional names against the backdrop of explosive development of the accommodation infrastructure (the creation of new boarding houses was especially prominent). Apart from the extremely diverse architecture with no local or regional relevance, numerous structures appeared to bear the strangest names for this locality: *Noblesse, Davidoff, Ama, Vidraru, Monaco, Perla* etc. All these were the consequence of globalization and anarchy of the 20th century construction. This situation serves as a clear case of disregard for the brands' perennial and established features [46]. At the same period of time, however, the *Nymphaea* Wellness Thermal complex project and *Băile Felix* began to emerge as national brands.

During the post-socialist period, the iconography used in the promotion of the brands reflected their relationship to the locality and the territory [47]. This is seen from several prominent examples.

One is the tourist activity related to the *Pârâul Peţea* Nature Reserve, with many fliers and websites promoting it as a "unique gem" and a tourist attraction point, although the actual point of attraction, the lotus flower, is virtually extinct in most parts of the reservation (fig. 2). This is an attempt to regenerate an almost extinct brand where little to no chance exists for the brand to gain previous positions in the same category.

Another is an interesting attempt to transfer an almost extinct brand into a different category or to create a new category by including the *Pârâul Peșea* Nature Reserve and a future Village Museum from Crișuri Land into an eco-museum (fig. 2), much like Șomleu Hill being associated with the paleontological reserve and the natural monument The Betfia Aven.

A series of scientific papers emphasize the role of the reserve as the central point of the spa tourist system [10, 48].

Finally, the lotus flower itself is used as logo for many institutions, such as the University of Oradea (since 1964) or the Sânmartin Communal Sports Club, and in unique post stamps of the Romanian Post (fig. 6), dedicated to the three rare elements of fauna and flora from the *Pârâul Peșea* Nature Reserve.



Fig. 6. Romanian Post emission of unique post stamps with *Scardinius racovitzai*, *Melanopsis parreyssi* and *Nymphaea lotus var. thermalis* (8 December, 2008)

The vicinity of the city of Oradea as the main gathering point for tourists, as well as the presence of thermal waters on the city's territory, is reflected in local names "inherited" from the socialist period: the *Nufărul* neighborhood, the *Nymphaea* research journal published by the Țării Crișurilor Museum, or, more recently, the *Floare de Lotus* national song and dance contest, the *Lotus* mall, etc.

The opportunities for the brand development represented by the lotus flower and the thermal waters "will have to take into consideration the fundamental rules regarding the insurance of the brands' immortality, the threats and opportunities to come, such as: social, economic, political trends, environmental issues and globalization" [46, p. 42].

Brand, image and promotion of the Hel Peninsula, city, HMS and the Fokarium

In the case of the Hel tourist resort, the tourist system and its development can be divided into two periods, before and after 2003. Already in 1920, one summer after Poland regained its independence, work was undertaken to build a strong defense base for the Coast on



the Hel Peninsula. In the 1920s, a railway line was built connecting Puck on the Gulf of Gdańsk leading across the Hel Peninsula, and in 1928, the construction of a naval port began in the city of Hel. At the same time, one tenth of the final section of the spit, from Jurata to the end of the cape, was heavily militarized. The development of tourism in this region was prohibited by military ban on civil construction. No such structures could be built without the consent of the military authorities. Limits on tourist traffic were also imposed. The military presence on the Peninsula was regulated by a decree of the President of the Republic of Poland, Ignacy Mościcki, dated August 21, 1936 regarding the creation of the Fortified Hel Area. Almost sixty years after the end of World War II, on November 25, 2003, the Constitutional Tribunal ruled on the motion of the President of the Republic of Art. 15 section 2 of the Act of 24 July 2002 on recognizing part of the Hel Peninsula as an area of particular importance for the defense of the country. This verdict ended the existence of the fortified Hel area and opened the city for tourists.

a) *The period before 2003 (1945 – 2003)* was characterized by limited access to Hel, the necessity to agree on the development of the infrastructure with the military and limited tourist traffic. From an ecological point of view, apart from the devastation of the natural environment related to the stay of the army and the expansion of military infrastructure, a small number of tourists favored the development of fauna and flora on the peninsula.

b) *The period after 2003* saw economic transformation, which was especially vivid after the military ended their presence on the Hel Peninsula: the number of tourists soared, and the degradation of natural areas became more and more pronounced.

Similar to the *Pârâul Peșea* Nature Reserve, imagery of the Hel played an important role in brand promotion and established a connection to the local peculiarities. Several examples of this are listed below.

First, the increase in recognition of the HMS was associated with the promotion of the eco-friendly approach to the use of natural resources of the Baltic Sea, and especially the natural values of the *Nadmorski* landscape park, which covers the Hel Peninsula, the Puck Bay and a part of the aquatorium of the Gulf of Gdansk [48 – 50].

Second, several scientific papers highlight the role of the reserve as the central point of the Hel Peninsula tourist system [51 – 53].

However, compared to the lotus logo from *Băile Felix*, the seal is not an open and widely-used tourist brand, as it is often absent from many local logos. It can be found on the website of Hel Marine Station, in the name of one of the newly built apartment buildings in

Hel, and an image of the seal can be seen in store windows. Still, the Polish Post, too, issued a series of stamps featuring three Baltic seals (grey, common and ringed, Fig. 7). New stamps were introduced at an event held at the Marine Station of the Institute of Oceanography at the University of Gdańsk in Hel.



Fig. 7. Polish Post emission of unique post stamps with seals: *Halichoerus grypus*, *Phoca vitulina* and *Pusa hispida* (31 July, 2009)

DATA BASE INTERPETATION AND RESULTS FOR THE PÂRÂUL PEȚEA NATURE RESERVE

The interpretation of the results according to the previously described specific objectives facilitate the understanding of the present-day situation and help account for the territorial realities. This, in its turn, may represent a starting point in elaborating certain strategies for the development and promotion of the spa tourist system by considering contemporary trends, brands and local resources. Moreover, the local respondents' responses show the degree of knowledge referring to their own resources, those of the environment they live in, and the real/false image of the basic foundations important for the local development strategies. The (in)sufficiency of knowledge about the present-day local realities is fully reflected in the results of this study. Thus, for example, a number of respondents associate the thermal lotus with *Băile Felix* and not with *1 Mai*.

Information sources for the reserve

Using only the information from the respondents who had heard about the existence of the reserve, we tried to identify their main information sources; these are shown in Figure 8 and include schools (47,3%), media – including newspapers (37,5%), followed by friends (27,3%), family (23,4%) and the Internet (18,2%). Only some respondents said they had received information about the reserve at their work place.

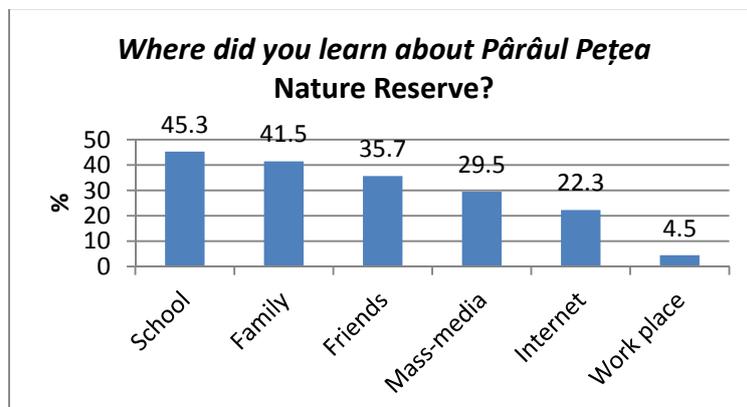


Fig. 8. Information sources about the *Pârâul Peţea* Nature Reserve

Generally, the Băile Felix-1 Mai spa tourist system is nationally acknowledged and appreciated due to the existence of thermal waters with therapeutic benefits. The analysis of the questionnaire results confirms the importance of this factor: most subjects believe that the popularity of the brand and appreciation of the tourist system it represents are linked to the thermal waters (81.1 %) and to the related therapeutic procedures and treatments (62 %), determined by the valorization of thermal water. As for the reserve (30.4 %) and the protected species of animals and plants (29.1 %), local respondents consider them less important for brand recognition (fig. 9). Another interesting aspect is that very few people make the connection between the thermal water as basic/supporting resource and the plant and animal species protected in this habitat. Why no image or logo connects these three natural tourist resources is a topic for further analysis.

Among other reasons *Băile Felix* and *1 Mai* are appreciated the respondents mentioned the aqua park, good tourist services, local cuisine and beautiful landscapes.

A positive finding is that 67 % of the local population are well informed about the existence of the *Pârâul Peţea* Nature Reserve (however, 33 % of those who are not so well informed about the reserve is still a big slice of the local population). Even though the protected lotus flower is known, in most cases it is wrongly associated with *Băile Felix*. The education level correlates significantly with the responses, with the group of the less-informed respondents being also the group with lower levels of education (Pearson coefficient of correlation = 7,323, $p < 0.05$).

Selecting only the data collected from subjects who declared that they know about this reserve (67 %), we wanted to deepen the analysis regarding their degree of knowledge. It was found that most of respondents state that the reserve is well known at national and even international level primarily because of the existence of the species of *Nymphaea Lotus* (thermal water lily). Thermal waters, as well as pro-

tected flora and fauna species are often mentioned as other elements for which the reserve is appreciated. However, only a few respondents were aware that the area is recognized as a nature reserve. Also, most subjects (91 %) consider that the reserve is in an advanced state of degradation. This knowledge is generated not by the (visitation) of the local population to the protected area, but by the aggressive mass-media information campaign.

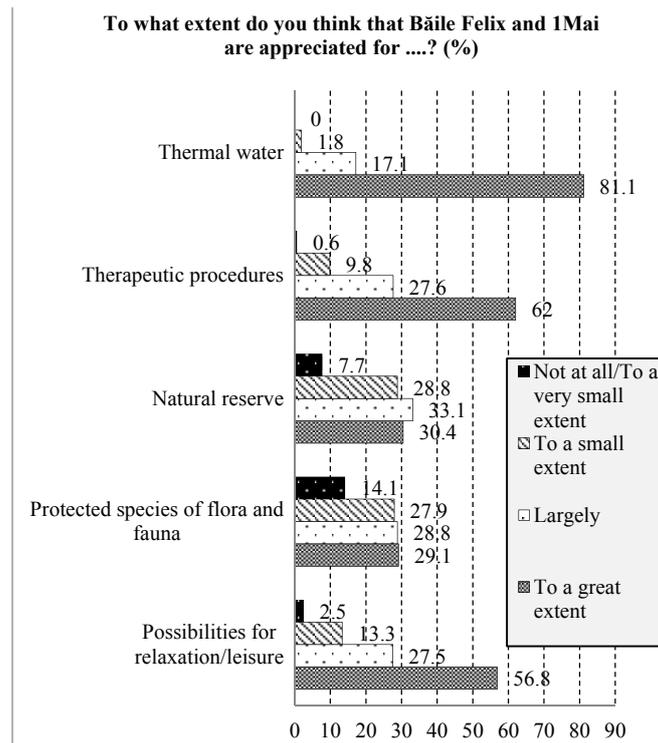


Fig. 9. The degree of awareness about the nature reserve among local population

Reserve degradation

This section is dedicated to the analysis of the responses of those aware of the existence of the reserve. It deals with the perceived state of degradation of the reserve, the analysis of the understanding of the causes of degradation and proposed promotion strategies.

Respondents were asked to range their opinion regarding the risk of extinction to which the reserve is exposed. In this sense, we used a measurement scale ranged between 1 and 10, where 1 represented no risk at all, and 10 – immediate risk of extinction. The mean value was 7.6, which means that the local population is aware of the fact that the nature reserve is at a high risk of extinction.

On the same scale, the mean value of respondents` answers regarding the negative impact of tourism on the actual state of the reserve is 4.7 meaning that the local people do not see a negative connection between tourist activity in the area and the degradation of the nature reserve.

To what extent do you consider that the following aspects have contributed to the degradation of the reserve? (%)

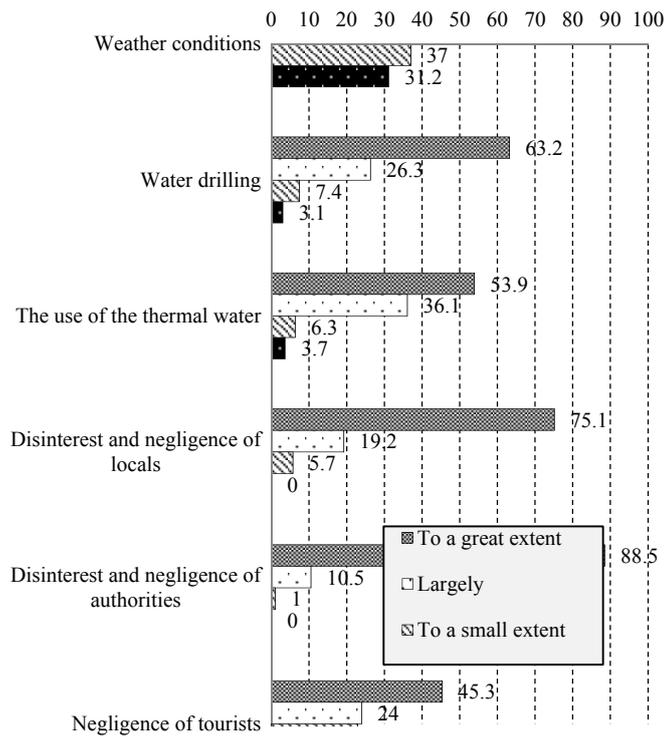


Fig. 10. Causes of degradation

It is important to mention the main perceived causes of the reserve degradation, listed in fig.10: disinterest and negligence of authorities (88.5%), disinterest and negligence of local inhabitants (75%), water drilling (63%) and the inadequate way of using thermal water (54%). Interestingly, fewer respondents (31%) believe that climate does not have a negative impact on the actual state of the reserve, although relevant research points to the major influence that droughts and the lack of rainfall from last few years have had on the reserve condition.

Reserve revitalization

Amending the behaviour of people who do not respect the law that protects the reserve is considered to be the main way of reducing

the degree of its degradation and preserving its condition (73 % of all answers). Raising awareness for local inhabitants (66 %) and rationalizing thermal water consumption (60 %) are other aspects that could contribute to the improvement of the actual state of the reserve, according to the local population (fig. 11).

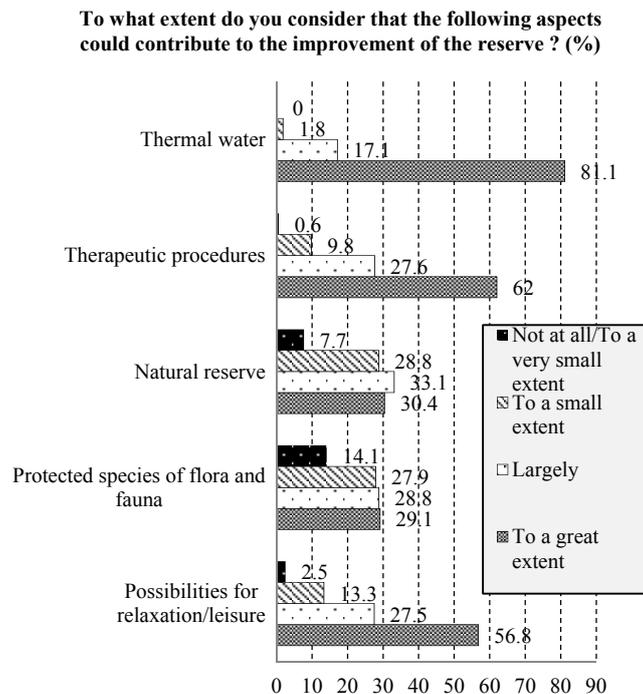


Fig. 11. Methods of revitalizing the reserve

The Ministry of Tourism is considered to be the authority which has the main responsibility for improving the actual condition of the reserve (according to 76 % of respondents), followed by the Environmental Protection Agency (66.5 % of all answers). The *Țării Crișurilor* Museum from Oradea, Oradea city police department and Oradea city hall were not considered by the respondents to be of major importance in terms of revitalizing the reserve.

Promotion of the reserve as a tourist destination

On a same scale with values ranged between 1 to 10 (1 = Not at all and 10 = To a great extent), respondents were asked to evaluate how well the reserve is promoted as a tourist destination. In this case, the mean value was 4.02 highlighting the fact that the local population does not believe current promotion campaigns are sufficient for the reserve.

Most respondents (79 %) consider that a strategy of promoting the tourism development of the entire Bihor County along with massive

online advertising campaigns (75.5%) could contribute to better promotion of the nature reserve. Yet the classical form of street advertising is preferred by almost 60% of the respondents (fig. 12).

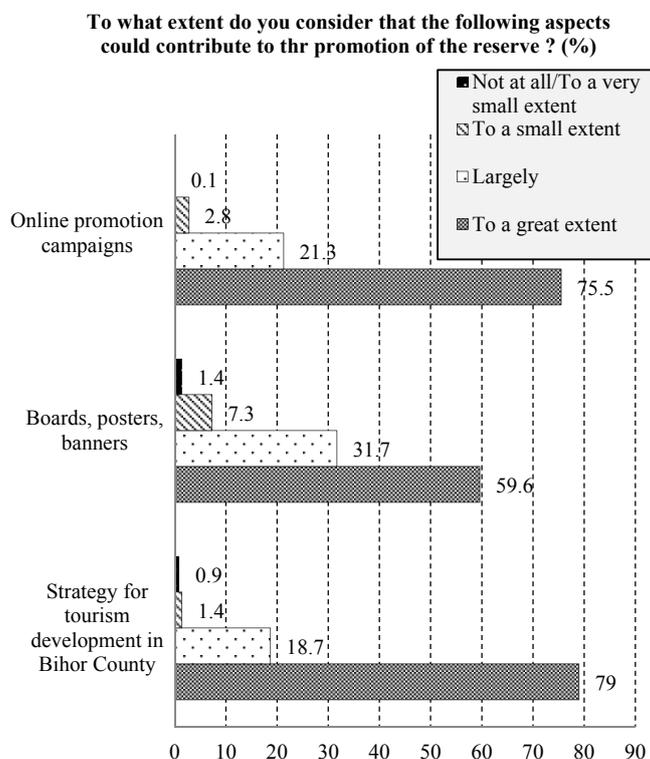


Fig. 12. Promotion strategies for the reserve

DATA BASE INTERPETATION AND RESULTS FOR THE HEL PENISULA, CITY OF HEL, HEL MARINE STATION AND THE FOKARIUM

The interpretation of the results according to the previously described specific objectives facilitate the understanding of the present-day situation and help account for the territorial realities. This, in its turn, may represent a starting point in elaborating certain strategies for the development and promotion of Hel Peninsula tourism system by considering contemporary trends, brands and local resources.

Information sources for the Hel Peninsula, city of Hel, HMS and the Fokarium

Using only the information from the respondents who had heard about the existence of the reserve, we tried to identify their main information sources. Note that since each of the respondents could choose several answers, taken together the numbers will not add up to 100%.

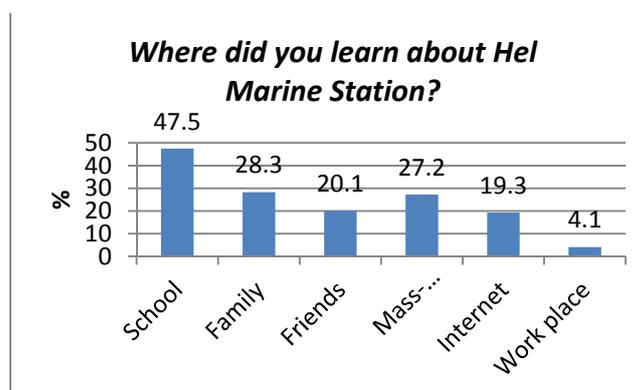


Fig. 13. Information sources about Hel Marine Station

The respondents who knew about the area, primarily listed schools (47,5 %), family trips (28,3 %), media, including newspapers (27,2 %) as their information sources about the HMS, followed by friends (20,1 %) and the Internet (19,3 %). Only a few of those surveyed reported that they had been informed of the HMS at their workplace.

Typically, the Hel Peninsula and rest of this tourist system are nationally acknowledged and appreciated for the existence of the Hel Marine Station with the *Fokarium*, and other natural and man-made attractions (table 2).

Table 2

Ranking of tourist attractions of Hel (> 30%)

Place in the ranking (2018)	Answers granted	Percent of indications	
		2008	2018
1	Fokarium	71	71
2	Beautiful beaches	63	69
3	Landscape	58	61
4	Lighthouse	47	49
5	The atmosphere of a fishing village	40	45
6	Peace and quiet off-season	35	31

Source: Majdak P., 2008, Tourist amenities of Hel and conceptions of their development in accordance to the preference and expectations of visitors, *Turystyka i Rekreacja*, 4, 137 – 143; our research.

Surveys carried out in 2008 and 2018 show an increase in the appreciation of the “beautiful beaches”, however the most recognizable tourist asset of the Hel peninsula, the *Fokarium* seal sanctuary did not

gain in appreciation over a period covered by these studies. A lot of respondents mention landscape features and anthropogenic features such as lighthouse or the special atmosphere of a fishing village. Interestingly, "peace and quiet off-season" was the least popular answer among those that had more than 30 % of is "Peace and quiet off-season", which indicates the possibility of developing traditionally seasoned tourism on the Baltic Sea for the period outside May-September, at the tourist summit in June-August.

Hel Peninsula, Hel city, HMS and the *Fokarium* degradation

The number of tourists visiting the Hel Peninsula has grown rapidly over the last decades. In order to obtain information on tourist traffic on the beaches of the Hel Peninsula, a monitoring study was carried out. Data on the number and spatial distribution of tourists was collected. The study focused on tourists staying on the beach between the shoreline and the dunes. The counting took place on 10 m sections, which were separated by intervals of the same length. This scheme was repeated ten times over 200 meters by each of the six groups of researchers. Each had to perform this test three times. The results of the study are presented in Table 3. Conducted in unfavorable weather conditions, at 12:30, the study was interrupted by a rapid rain. Some groups started measurements earlier than the others, therefore the results obtained on individual sections vary significantly [49].

Table 3

Number of tourists per 10 m on the northern beach of the Hel Peninsula

Tested section	Number of tourists	Average number of tourists / 10m
Władysławo – Chałupy	90	9,0
Chałupy – Kuźnica	87	7,0
Kuźnica – Jastarnia	56	2,8
Jastarnia – Jurata	108	3,6
Jurata – Hel Bór	9	0,5
Hel	121	12,1

Source: [49]

Already in surveys carried out in 2012 under similarly unfavorable weather conditions, the number of tourists on Hel was shown to be close to exceeding tourist capacity, and in our studies it is close to the tourist absorption capacity of the Hel peninsula (see Table 3). The

largest tourist loads (by their numbers) have been recorded at the sections of beaches between Władysławo and Chałupy, Chałupy and Kuźnica and on Hel, over 5 people for 10 m of the beach at each site. The period from 2013 to 2018 was characterized by very good weather, comparable in some weeks to temperatures in the resorts of Egypt and Tunisia [54]. What caused an even greater influx of tourists was political destabilization and terrorist attacks in the region of the Mediterranean Sea, in North Africa (Egypt, Tunisia) and the Middle East (Israel, Turkey), traditional destinations of Polish holiday-makers, who had now decided to spend their vacations on the Baltic sea [55–59]. National tourist crisis is worsened by the ever-increasing tourist traffic of foreigners. There is a clear impact of shopping tourism from the Kaliningrad Oblast [60], and Russian tourists often choose the region of Pomerania as their summer retreat destination. After the completion of several modern marinas, the number of yachts in the Gulf of Gdańsk increased considerably and the number of cruisers arriving to the ports of Gdańsk and Gdynia also increased [61].

Hel Peninsula, Hel city, HMS and the *Fokarium* revitalization, brand and promotion

The conducted research allowed to determine the main directions of protection of tourist locations on the Hel Peninsula (Fig. 14). As the respondents indicated, the tourist assets requiring immediate protection include the Baltic seals ("large" need of revitalization and "to a great extent" answers amounted to 94%), the natural reserve (92%), protected species of fauna and flora (87%) and lanscape (79%) – just like the possibilietes for relaxation and leisure (fig. 14).

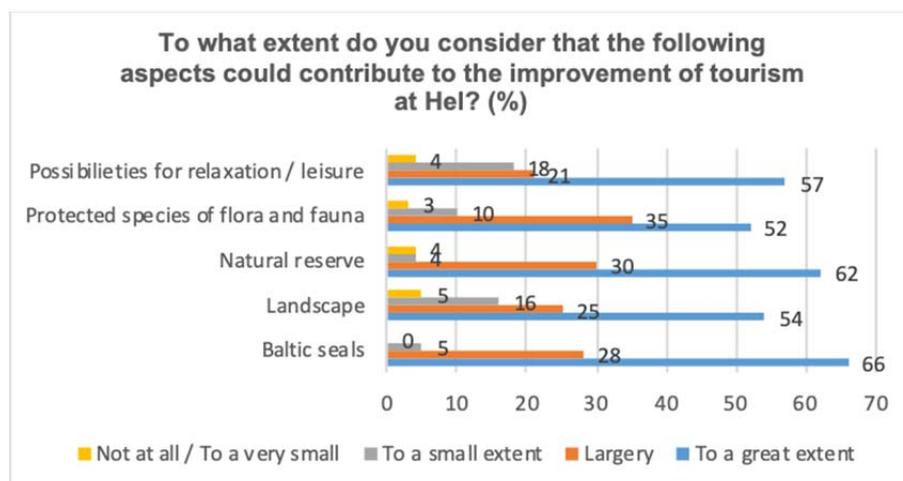


Fig. 14. Revitalization of the Hel Peninsula

The students surveyed demonstrated a high level of appreciation for the protection of the natural environment and its tourist values. The inhabitants of the Hel Peninsula, as evidenced by numerous press reports and events from the summer of 2018, in which about ten killed seals were found on the Gulf of Gdańsk Coast and the Puck Bay, may have a very different assessment of natural values in the studied region⁴. While these cases may be dismissed as isolated cases and not indicative of the full extent of environmental awareness of the inhabitants of the Baltic sea communities, the conflict of interests between local fishermen and environmentalists is clearly visible in the Baltic regions.

The brand of the Hel Peninsula as a tourist destination is widely recognized throughout Poland. Therefore, the conducted survey focused on the recognition of Hel Marine Station and the *Fokarium*, which are the most recognizable tourist attractions of the peninsula.

Table 4

Recognition of the HMS and the *Fokarium* brand by students

Group of students	Number Yes (%)	No (%)
Students from Pomerania (M)	76,9	23,1
Students from Pomerania (F)	78,0	22,0
Students from Pomerania (all)	77,6	23,4
Students from another Polish regions (M)	50,0	50,0
Students from another Polish regions (F)	60,0	40,0
Students from another Polish regions (all)	57,1	42,9
All students	70,6	29,4

⁴ Why do seals die on the Baltic Sea? Four seals found ashore. Expert: This is a dangerous period // Gazeta Wyborcza, 2018. URL: http://wiadomosci.gazeta.pl/wiadomosci/7,114883,23489269_czcz-nad-baltykiem-gina-seal-sea-wyrzucilo-juz-cztery-ekspertka.html (access date: 03.06.2018); The fifth dead seal found on the Baltic. PLN 50,000 reward for finding perpetrators. 2018. URL: <http://www.polsatnews.pl/wiadomosc/2018-06-06/piata-martwa-foka-znaleziona-nad-baltykiem-alredy-50-tysiecy-zl-award-for-indication-sprawcow/> (access date: 06.06.2018); Baran W. Dead seals at the Baltic Sea. The prosecutor's office looks into the issue. 2018. URL: https://wiadomosci.wp.pl/martwe-foki-nad-baltykiemprokuratura-laczy-wszystkie-sprawy-62619371912126_73a (access date: 12.06.2018); Kisicka A. Another dead seals at the Baltic Sea. 2018. URL: <https://fakty.interia.pl/polska/news-kolejne-martwe-foki-nad-baltykiem,nId,2594687> (access date: 15.06.2018).

The results of the research confirmed the greater recognition of the Hel Marine Station and the *Fokarium* brand by students from Pomerania. As many as 77.6 % of them have visited or heard about HMS and the seal sanctuary, with very little difference in responses between men and women. The brand recognition is different for students from outside the region, although it is still quite high. Here, 57.1 % knew of the attractions mentioned in the study, which is 20 % less than for the students who were originally from Pomerania. Gender diversity is also visible in these responses. Half of male students and 60 % of female students from outside the region knew about HMS, which can indicate more interest in environmental protection among women (Tab. 4).

The short season for tourism on the Hel peninsula is mainly associated with treacherous weather conditions, yet it is also regulated by the administrative decisions related to the summer period of students' holidays. It should be pointed out that it is possible to extend the tourist season, just as it has been done with winter holidays, which last two weeks in Poland. To extend the winter tourist season, winter holidays begin at different times in different regions of the country, moving by a week in specific regions, which increases their total length from two weeks to five weeks, and at the same time reduces anthropogenic pressure on winter mountain resorts. A similar solution for summer holidays would lead to the extension of the summer season and reduce the burden on the environment of the Peninsula, as a relatively similar number of tourists would be spread over a longer period of time. Summer holidays could start, for example, at the end of May and last until mid-September. Just like winter holiday season, it would last longer, but moving their start would diminish the number of tourists on the Baltic coast at any given time.

CONCLUSIONS

Nationally and internationally renowned, the *Pârâul Peșea* Nature Reserve benefits from a relatively high degree of acknowledgement amongst the local population, especially those with above average education level. Most respondents (67 %) claim that the fame of the reserve is linked to the existence of the thermal water lily, *Nymphaea lotus var. thermalis*. However, in the promotional campaigns the protected species is frequently wrongly placed in *Băile Felix* and it is confused with the common water lily, artificially introduced to the resort. The thermal waters, prolific natural environment for the development of rare fauna species – *Melanopsis parreysii* and *Scardinius erythrophthalmus racovitzai* (Racoviță's Rudd), are also renowned as being iconic and contributing to the attractiveness of the reserve and of the *Băile Felix-1 Mai* rural tourist system.



Currently, the reserve is in an advanced state of degradation, facing a very high risk of extinction, which is acknowledged by many people living in the vicinity. Our research demonstrates that the tourist activity which generally is localized at resorts is not seen as having a negative impact on the advanced degradation state of the reserve. On the other hand, the blame is placed at the authorities' and local population's negligence and lack of interest. Drilling for thermal waters and the irrational use of thermal waters in the area contribute to the negative dynamics of the nature reserve.

The civic commitment is considered to be the basis for the development of the sense of protection for the natural resources in the area studied, and it is the society, through competent authorities – especially at the national level – that is responsible for identifying and imposing fines on those who do not respect the protected status of this land, and for promoting environmental awareness among the local population. Rationalization of the way in which the thermal water from the area is used could significantly slow down to the nature reserve degradation.

Tourism in the area could and should also benefit from the natural tourist attractions, among which is the *Pârâul Peşea* Nature Reserve. The lack of proper promotion, especially during its peak period and the negative effects of this deficiency are a familiar situation for the local population. The research results emphasize the urgent need to elaborate and implement an integrated tourist development strategy at Bihor County level which should nationally, as well as internationally, promote the main natural tourist attraction sites.

In the case of the *Băile Felix – 1 Mai* the key brand elements for the tourist system are the thermal water and the thermal water lily. Both can be found within the *Pârâul Peşea* Nature Reserve, both are on the brink of extinction. This shows the paradoxical disconnect between the brand iconography and real-life situation, in which the protected species of thermal water lily continues to be advertised and graphically promoted in tourist offers, infrastructure elements, etc., thus contributing to the creation of picture that is detached from reality.

As late as May 2015, the *Pârâul Peşea* Nature Reserve and especially *Nymphaea lotus var. thermalis* could be found on various advertising websites, which shows the lack of accurate information regarding the actual situation. This considered, however, it is desired to keep these elements at the heart of the promotional brand.

It is interesting to note that in the era of digitization, the Internet lags behind school, family and friends as the main source of information in the surveyed sample, which also has implications for the development of adequate brand promotion strategy.

As our research outlines, the Hel Peninsula, with the Hel Marine Station, the *Fokarium* and numerous other man-made tourist attrac-

tions is not only nationally, but also internationally renowned and appreciated by visitors. Almost half of our subjects claim that they have learned their information about the Peninsula from schools.

Currently, the reserve is in an advanced stage of development, however it is facing a very high reputational risk, especially among local fishermen. On the other hand, a mass-media defence campaign of the most important values of the station – the grey seals – is underway. Tourism in the area could and should also benefit from the natural tourist attractions, among which are beautiful beaches, landscapes and the atmosphere of a fishing village.

Our research concerned two nationally and internationally acknowledged and appreciated European tourist attractions: The *Pârâul Peșea* Nature Reserve located in the area of *Băile Felix*, Romania, and Hel Marine Station Situated at the seashore of Hel Peninsula, Gulf of Gdansk, Poland. The results generated from our analysis pointed at the fact that both places enjoy natural and made-man attractions which qualify them as inviting tourist destinations due to the presence of rare fauna and flora species and landscape features. Yet, our study results also outlined the need to properly protect, revitalize and promote these natural environments in order for them to develop and thrive.

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REVIEW



SECURITY AGENDA FOR THE BALTIC REGION: STATE, SOCIETY, HUMAN

Societal Security in the Baltic Sea Region: Expertise Mapping and Raising Policy Relevance. – Riga: Latvian Institute of International Affairs, 2018. – 269 p.

The book *Societal Security in the Baltic Sea Region* [1] addresses an urgent problem that is of both regional and global importance. The volume comprises chapters authored by recognized experts from Russia, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Belarus, Poland, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Denmark, and Sweden. However, in view of the authors' affiliations and the very problem addressed in the book, it would be more reasonable to broaden the title to include the whole region of Northern and North-Eastern Europe.

The problem of societal security has taken on both practical and conceptual urgency. Diverse factors at play have changed the security agenda of international relations. These changes may have twofold consequences for the Baltic region and the world.

One of them is globalization, which means an increased transparency of national borders for people, goods, and finance. This process is inevitably accompanied by the erosion of national sovereignties. A partial loss of sovereignty provides at least an ambiguous phenomenon as regards regional integration and closer political, economic, and cultural cooperation. It looks especially true for the Baltic region states. At the same time the world faces overwhelming force inevitably taking governance decisions to the supranational level, which still lacks a unified legal framework and universal models of governance that could be compared with national ones in terms of efficiency and social responsibility. In this sense, a partial loss of sovereignty by a state originates its new vulnerabilities.

As for the new security challenges they are also a product of globalization. The growing role of non-governmental actors in

international politics entails the wide use of non-traditional means of influence. Here, the consequences are also twofold. A stronger presence of NGOs and human rights and environmental organizations as well as closer political, economic, academic, and cultural ties are weaving the fabric of cooperation that supplements and enriches intergovernmental interactions. Nevertheless, there is a downside to this process. Still based on the responsibility of states, international law finds it difficult to either control or hold accountable non-state actors, which are moving to the supranational level.

Secondly, dramatic changes have occurred with respect to the military (hard) and non-military (soft) threats: the balance has shifted towards the latter. This has decreased military tension in the Baltic region, as compared to the times of the Cold War. Soft threats became of greater significance because today's society more depends on information and communications technologies, which are permeating all the spheres of everyday life and essential services.

The openness of Western society is fraught with the danger of marginalised strata, criminal communities, and international terrorist networks acting in a way that is destructive or even catastrophic for society. This equally applies to the realm of the moral and the spiritual, resulting in extremist and radical attitudes gaining ground in Europe, as well as the growing popularity of 'protective' right ideologies. The political and economic unrest in North Africa and the Middle East, which resulted in a massive influx of refugees in Europe, gives a clear picture of how serious the problems are that have confronted Northern Europe. In the former Baltic Soviet republics, there is a strong political element to them. These countries are creating proverbial 'fifth columns' by marginalising their Russian speakers.

Thirdly, the attitudes of elites and their perception of security threats in the Baltic region states were strongly affected by the crises in Russia's relations with Georgia (2008) and Ukraine (2014). The sharpest reaction came from former Soviet republics and socialistic states: Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia. These countries were drawing analogies between Russia's policy towards them and the Ukrainian and Georgian scenarios.

Having held an anti-Russia position for many years, they suddenly felt that the defence umbrella, on which they had relied so much, might fail to protect them. The dwindling financial and economic support from the EU for these countries (including Poland – a showcase of successful eurointegration for neophytes) contributes to the sense of premonition among academic and political elites.

In these conditions, the states of Northern Europe and the Baltic region, which have long experience of regional cooperation, have found themselves at crossroads amid growing tensions between the West and Russia. However, this does not mean the consolidation of the Baltic States, but the contrary.

What are the limits to cooperation in security matters and what are possible forms of such cooperation? What are the specific features of national security politics? Is a common security policy possible? Is the crisis in the relations between Russia and the West leading the emergence of a 'third way'? These and many other questions tackled in the book under review will be of interests for many researchers.

As for the methodology, the authors prefer the disputable concept of societal security and continue traditions of the Copenhagen School in security studies. The authors emphasize the idea that societal security prevails over the other types of security: political, economic, military, and environmental. This idea is rooted in the interpretations of security given by post-Positivists, in particular, advocates of social constructivism, on which the Copenhagen School [2] and its adherents [3, 4, 5] heavily rely.

The novelty of the proposed approach to security is the interpretation of threats from the perspective of society rather than of state. Such treatment was never given to security within geopolitics, strategic studies, or neorealism. The traditional view on security focuses on the identification of conditions and factors affecting the perception and formulation of threats as objective phenomena in society-state relations.

The concept of societal security was introduced in the 1990s when smaller European states faced the first consequences of further European integration and globalisation. These included the

emergence of supranational institutions of the EU, as well as many aspects of social life changing to suit external templates. Other consequences included an increase in the number of migrants from European states who were altering the social, ethnic, and cultural environment of the host countries. All this led to a partial loss of national sovereignty. While integration seems to be a blessing, small nations are at risk of losing their identity and finding themselves dissolved among others. It makes reasonable to distinguish between state and societal security.

Following Constructivists, the Copenhagen School brought to the fore the subjective aspect of security as a social phenomenon. The perception of threats is always affected by the identities of individuals, which has many components: political experience, level of education, social standing, ideological preferences, etc. According to the Copenhagen School, a threat is what society considers a threat. The level of threat is identified by analysing a variety of oral and written texts circulating through society.

This reliance on texts and the strong sociological element of this approach make it possible to avoid the subjectivity of the opinions which were appropriated by politicians, the military, and elites and which they try to pass for universally valid. The Copenhagen School believes that the very problem of security is reduced to the persistence of the identity of the state, a social group, or an individual. A threat to security is defined as a threat to identity, which includes such aspects as ideological and religious preferences, culture, nationality, etc.

The above seems reasonable if the sociological approach is perceived as a supplement for the traditional one. However, if the former is to replace the latter (which is proposed by the Copenhagen School), a question arises as to whether the analysis of politics can be reduced to the analysis of political texts. This leaves room for further considerations. However, the authors of the book avoid extremes. They offer an analysis of doctrines and political processes rather than conclusions about securitisation as a speech practice.

Another important postulate is that the state-centric approach to security is outdated since the state cannot always effectively re-



spond to new challenges. This places emphasis on human security, which has to prevail over national security: the former should set the priorities of the latter. The editors of the book call this idea the general thread running through the monograph.

However, there is an inconsistency: the concept of human security, similarly to that of identity, is given a very broad definition [6] both by the authors of the monograph and other researchers. This approach is characteristic of post-Positivism in general and the Copenhagen School in particular. In practical terms, such universality has to protect each and everyone from literally everything: famine, domestic violence, gender-based discrimination, diseases [7], and the list can go on and on. Human security is a beautiful dream but, in reality, it may prove to be objectless. A vivid example is the Norwegian concept of civil protection. One of the authors of this concept, Claudia Morsut, writes: 'it is easier to define what is not included in the [...] term' [1, p. 62]. At the same time, the humanitarian aspects have become an important factor in the security policies of the Baltic region states. This necessitates the analysis and further development of the human security concept.

The authors admit that dialogue on the correlation between human and national security, national and international security, violence and non-violence in politics is far from complete. Moreover, the role of the state in providing societal security remains essential in many cases. Non-governmental actors act effectively only when their efforts are coordinated with those of the state. Overall, it seems that most authors feel constrained in the narrow path set by the editors of the book [1, p. 8]. The only things that most of the works derive from the Copenhagen School are Barry Buzan's concept of societal security and the notion of human security. However, the term 'societal security' was never adequately translated into most of the languages spoken in the Baltic region.

As a result, in the Baltics, Poland, Belarus, and Russia, societal security is not interpreted in line with the views of Buzan but rather understood as part of national social policy and the policies of non-governmental actors. The state and society are not set in opposition as different referents of security. Rather, they are viewed

as bound by a social contract. If such a contract is absent, the state strives to establish it. The use of the concepts of human security and societal security in doctrines are solely formal and without appropriate explanations. The authors of the monograph stress that the concept of societal security has evolved to incorporate the notion of an existential threat to identity and those of human security, sustainable development, and others.

A considerable advantage of the book under review is the novelty empirically-based approach to security in the Baltic region. The authors of the monograph try both to demonstrate the diversity of political practices and to find similarities among different countries. In particular, attention is paid to those, characteristic of the 'Nordic model' (as formulated by Mika Aaltola and Tapio Juntunen).

The long-established Nordic model 'refers to similarities in the transparency in public administration, respect for the rule of law, equality as a key value, and the belief that social welfare heals societal cleavages and produces societal stability' [1, p.31]. These similarities stem from the ambition to build a harmonious society based on state-promoted redistribution of wealth. The other countries of the region, such as Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, do not seem to fit this definition.

An interesting feature of the Nordic (or third) way is the policy of neutrality during the Cold War between two superpowers. This particularly applies to Finland. Remarkably, an important stage of rapprochement between Russia and the US was the 2018 summit held in Helsinki. Of course, one should not overestimate the third-way concept: there are heated debates on military security, and the West desires to take Finland and Sweden into NATO.

Many authors draw an important conclusion: threats to security differ from country to country, and this blights the prospects of a common security policy. Thus, a single position of security threats to the Baltic region has never been formulated. The former Soviet republics and socialistic states focus on the 'hard' threats coming from Russia, ranging from a hybrid war to territorial expansion. The Nordic states have opted for a softer security policy usually described as resilience.

These countries link resilience with regulation and cooperation. Moreover, they refuse to recognise any states as antagonistic and place emphasis on societal problems, most of which come from abroad and are associated with uncontrolled migration and terrorism. Iceland postulates the protection of the public against the abuses of state and police as the major problem of security [1, p.44]. Norway and Sweden are also inclined to equate human and civil security.

For the former Soviet republics, represented by Estonia, resilience has little to do with regulation and is closely connected with resistance in the possible warfare with Russia. Technically, after their accession to NATO, the Baltics brought their rhetoric into compliance with the societal security concept. However, the 2008 Russian-Georgian war put everything back on course. An important element of societal security is psychological defence aimed at the 'protection of common values' (including linguistic unification, i. e. the displacement of the Russian language), 'the sense of security', and 'trust amongst the society and towards the actions taken by the state' [1, pp. 102–110]. The Baltic States and Poland find it important to fight against the information warfare allegedly waged by Russia. The Russia-Ukraine crisis added concerns about hybrid threats. Overall, the four countries give priority to national security over societal security.

A number of texts use incorrect terms: 'Russo-Ukrainian war', Russian aggression in Eastern Europe, 'annexation of Crimea', and others. This speaks to the prevalence of anti-Russian rhetoric and the desire to simplify the situation by reducing it to the need for preventing the alleged Russian threat.

As mentioned above, the authors felt constrained within the theoretical framework of the Copenhagen School. However, actual politics have no obligation to comply with any political theory. The advantage of the book under review is that it analyses the actual political situation rather than reflections on it. The latter is the common drawback of studies carried out by constructivists and post-Positivists.

The monograph gives cause for thought as regards the priorities of the Baltic and Nordic States' security policies. These policies are not similar, and they interpret the basic concepts of societal security differently. All this is the result of socioeconomic disparities

and differences in social problems, geopolitical positions, and the history of relations with Russia. The conclusions are made in the final chapter, which sums up the differences in similarities in interpretations of societal security policies.

The only states to pursue a harmonised policy and use cooperation tools are the Nordic countries. In the future, they may constitute the core of a common regional security policy. The authors attempt to outline the common agenda. However, it looks very abstract and resembles a project that should be tackled by the expert community.

In Poland, Estonia, Lithuania, and Latvia, the perception of threats is strongly affected by anti-Russian ideological stereotypes. What causes these attitudes? Is it the fear of becoming Russia's satellite once again? Will these attitudes be reinforced by the dwindling support from the EU? The book gives many answers and raises even more questions.

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